ALEC REED ACADEMY
PROUD TO LEARN

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Policy Owner:	DSL	**Approved By:**	Board of Trustees
Academy Trust Safeguarding Trustee	Dee Morrison	**Requirement to Publish on Website:**	Yes
Target Audience:	ARA Staff	**Statutory Policy:**	Yes
Purpose:	To inform as to how we are meeting our statutory duty and guidance on how to keep our children safe.		
Review Date:	July 2027	**Approval Date:**	July 2026

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Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)		
Deputy DSL's	Julie Porter Clare Dormer	Julie.porter@alecreedacademy.co.uk ext 7953 Clare.dormer@alecreedacademy.co.uk ext 7962
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Emmanuel Adofo	asv@ealing.gov.uk Duty Line: 020 8825 8930
Chair of the Board of Trustees Safeguarding Trustee	Louise Prince Dee Morrison	Through Zara Campion
Channel helpline	Paul Smith	smithpa@ealing.gov.uk 020 7340 7264

1. Introduction and Policy Statement

At Alec Reed Academy safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority. We recognise that children learn best when they feel safe, secure, valued, and listened to. Safeguarding is therefore embedded in all aspects of school life.

This policy sets out how the school meets its statutory safeguarding responsibilities and explains the procedures for identifying, responding to, recording, and reporting concerns.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, trustees, volunteers, contractors and visitors share a duty to:

- Protect children from maltreatment
- Prevent impairment of children's health or development
- Ensure children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care
- Enable children to achieve the best possible outcomes

This policy reflects the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, effective from September 2026, and must be read and followed by all adults working in or on behalf of the school.

2. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy is based on the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection legislation (UK GDPR)

The school follows local safeguarding partnership procedures and expectations.

3. Safeguarding Culture and Ethos (Strengthened in KCSIE 2026)

KCSIE 2026 places increased emphasis on culture, environment, and behaviour.

At Alec Reed Academy we:

- Create an environment where children feel safe to speak
- Promote respectful, inclusive behaviour
- Encourage professional curiosity and respectful challenge
- Ensure safeguarding is visible and discussed openly
- Embed safeguarding into policies, curriculum, and leadership decisions

Children are taught that:

- They have a right to feel safe
- They can talk to a trusted adult
- Their concerns will be taken seriously
- Abuse is never their fault

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Board of Trustees

The board of trustees holds strategic oversight of safeguarding and ensures that:

- Safeguarding policies and procedures comply with KCSIE 2026
- The DSL has sufficient time, authority, training, and resources
- A safeguarding trustee is nominated
- Safeguarding arrangements are reviewed annually
- Allegations against leaders are managed appropriately
- Online safety is prioritised and resourced
- Safer recruitment procedures are consistently applied

4.2 Principal/Headteacher

The Principal/Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring safeguarding policies are implemented effectively
- Supporting and supervising the DSL(s)/DDSL's
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training
- Promoting a culture of safeguarding vigilance
- Acting on safeguarding concerns and allegations
- Working with external agencies where required
- Ensuring children are not disadvantaged due to safeguarding needs

4.3 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

The DSL and the operational DDSLs have overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and will:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding concerns
- Provide advice and support to staff
- Decide when to make referrals to children's social care
- Liaise with the local authority and other agencies
- Ensure referrals are followed up and outcomes documented
- Maintain secure, detailed, and accurate safeguarding records
- Monitor vulnerable groups of children
- Lead safeguarding training and updates

- Promote staff wellbeing following safeguarding cases
- Ensure children's views inform safeguarding decisions

Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard and act in the DSL's absence.

4.4 All Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

All adults working in the school must:

- Read and understand KCSIE Part 1 (mandatory)
- Follow this policy and the staff code of conduct
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Be alert to signs of abuse and neglect
- Report concerns immediately to the DSL/DDSL/SaFE Worker
- Understand that fear of being wrong must not prevent action
- Know that safeguarding concerns can arise from a single indicator or pattern of behaviour

5. Definitions of Abuse and Safeguarding Concerns

Staff are trained to recognise abuse occurring at home, in the community, online, or in school.

5.1 Physical Abuse

Deliberate physical harm including hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, or suffocation.

5.2 Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment that damages a child's self-worth, including humiliation, threats, rejection, or exposure to domestic abuse.

5.3 Sexual Abuse

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including non-contact abuse such as watching sexual acts or exposure to harmful content.

5.4 Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's physical and emotional needs, leading to serious impairment of health or development.

6. Child-on-Child Abuse (Expanded and Strengthened – KCSIE 2026) see Additional Information Section, page 9

The school recognises that children can abuse other children, both physically and emotionally, and that such behaviour is a safeguarding issue, not a behaviour issue alone.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- Sexual violence and harassment

- Upskirting
- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Coercive, controlling, or exploitative behaviour
- Ideological or hate-based abuse

The school:

- Responds calmly and proportionately
- Takes all allegations seriously
- Separates behaviour management from safeguarding response
- Considers power imbalances
- Avoids victim-blaming
- Provides support to all children involved

7. Online Safety and Technology-Enabled Harm (Major Emphasis in KCSIE 2026)

The school recognises that safeguarding risks increasingly occur online and through technology.

Risks include:

- Grooming
- Sexual exploitation
- Image-based abuse
- AI-generated sexual content
- Radicalisation online
- Exposure to harmful material
- Cyberbullying
- Coercive control using digital devices

The school:

- Teaches online safety through the curriculum
- Uses age-appropriate filtering and monitoring systems
- Responds quickly to online safeguarding incidents
- Trains staff in online harm indicators
- Works with parents to promote safe digital use

8. Contextual Safeguarding and Extra-Familial Harm

KCSIE 2026 highlights that harm may occur outside the family home.

The school recognises risks arising from:

- Peer groups
- Local community spaces
- Transport routes
- Online environments

The school works in partnership with safeguarding agencies to:

- Identify contextual risks
- Support children exposed to exploitation
- Reduce vulnerability through early intervention
- Share information appropriately

9. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Safeguarding and mental health are closely linked.

Staff are trained to notice:

- Changes in behaviour
- Withdrawal or emotional distress
- Signs of trauma
- Self-harm or suicidal ideation10

Mental health concerns may constitute a safeguarding concern and should be reported to the DSL/DDSL's where risk is identified.

The school promotes emotional wellbeing and access to support.

10. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

All concerns must be reported **immediately** to the DSL/DDSL's.

Staff should:

- Record concerns accurately and objectively
- Use the child's own words where possible
- Avoid asking leading questions
- Never investigate

If a child is at immediate risk, staff must:

- Contact children's social care or the police
- Inform the DSL/DDSL's as soon as possible

11. Record Keeping and Information Sharing see Additional Information Section, page 19

The school:

- Maintains secure and confidential safeguarding records
- Keeps records separate from academic files
- Maintains clear chronologies
- Transfers safeguarding records securely when children move schools
- Shares information lawfully and proportionately

12. Safer Recruitment (KCSIE 2026 Part 3)

The school follows safer recruitment procedures including:

- Enhanced DBS checks
- Barred list checks
- Identity and right-to-work checks
- Prohibition checks where applicable
- Verification of qualifications
- Recording checks on the Single Central Record (SCR)

At least one trained safer recruitment panel member is present at interviews.

13. Allegations Against Staff (see Additional Information Section, page 11)

All allegations are managed in line with statutory guidance.

The school:

- Contacts the LADO when thresholds are met
- Protects children while allegations are investigated
- Supports staff appropriately
- Maintains confidentiality

14. Whistleblowing

Staff are encouraged to report any concerns about unsafe practice or poor safeguarding culture.

The school:

- Protects whistleblowers
- Provides clear reporting routes
- Supports escalation where necessary

15. Training and Staff Awareness

All staff receive:

- Safeguarding training at induction
- Regular updates during the year
- Training on child-on-child abuse and online safety
- Clear guidance on reporting concerns

DSLs/DDSL's undertake advanced training at least every two years.

16. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

Safeguarding is monitored through:

- Regular DSL/DDSL's supervision
- Policy reviews
- Safeguarding audits
- Staff feedback and training evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually and updated in line with statutory guidance.

17. Linked Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Online Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Additional Information and Guidance

Child-on-Child Abuse

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 has strengthened expectations around contextual safeguarding, early help, misogyny and serious violence.

The school role includes incidents that:

- Occur on the school premises
- Occur off-site, including online, where they impact on pupils' safety or wellbeing
- Involve current pupils or pupils known to the school

Child-on-child abuse can affect children of any age and may involve children of the same or different ages. Child-on-child abuse refers to harmful behaviour by one child towards another. This may involve a single incident or a pattern of behaviour and may be deliberate or unintentional, but it is always treated as a safeguarding concern.

KCSIE makes clear that all such behaviour should be recognised, taken seriously and acted upon.

Child-on-child abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying, including physical, verbal, emotional and discriminatory bullying
- Online abuse, including harmful messaging, coerced sharing of images, or intimidation using digital technologies
- Abusive language and harmful attitudes, including sexist or misogynistic language
- Physical harm or threats of harm
- Exploitation or misuse of power within peer relationships

KCSIE 2026 highlights the need for schools to challenge misogyny, harmful peer cultures and behaviour linked to serious violence at an early stage.

The school adopts the following principles when responding to child-on-child abuse:

- A child-centred approach: the welfare of all children involved is paramount
- No victim-blaming: children who report concerns will be believed and supported
- Contextual safeguarding: understanding peer groups, online contexts and wider influences
- Early intervention: addressing concerns before patterns of harm escalate
- Proportionate response: behaviour management does not replace safeguarding actions

These principles reflect KCSIE statutory expectations and guidance.

The school takes proactive steps to reduce the risk of child-on-child abuse by:

- Maintaining a strong culture of safeguarding and respect

- Teaching pupils about safe relationships, boundaries and respectful behaviour in an age-appropriate way
- Promoting clear reporting routes for pupils
- Providing staff with regular safeguarding training
- Monitoring behaviour trends and peer group dynamics

KCSIE emphasises that prevention and early help are essential parts of effective safeguarding practice. Pupils are encouraged to report concerns to a trusted adult and are reassured that they will be taken seriously.

All staff must:

- Treat any report or concern as a safeguarding issue
- Record the concern accurately and promptly
- Report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy (DDSL)

Staff must not investigate concerns independently.

The DSL/DDSL will:

- Gather information sensitively
- Assess the level of risk using local safeguarding thresholds
- Decide whether the matter requires early help, internal support, or referral to external agencies
- Ensure appropriate support is provided to all children involved

Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate, except where doing so would place a child at increased risk.

KCSIE stress the importance of clear decision-making, information sharing and multi-agency working.

Support for Children Involved

- Children who experience harm require emotional and pastoral support
- Children who cause harm may also have unmet needs and may require safeguarding or early help intervention

Support will be tailored to individual needs and reviewed regularly.

All concerns and actions relating to child-on-child abuse will be:

- Recorded securely and stored in line with data protection legislation
- Shared only with those who need to know for safeguarding purposes

KCSIE is clear that data protection must not prevent information sharing where a child may be at risk.

Additional Information and Guidance

Allegations Against Staff (Adults)

(Including Low-Level Concerns)

This information and guidance ensures that allegations are handled fairly, consistently and promptly, balancing the need to safeguard children with the rights and welfare of staff.

This additional information and guidance reflects:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

It applies to:

- All employed staff (including senior leaders and headteachers)
- Supply teachers
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Trustees

It relates to concerns or allegations arising:

- In school
- Outside of school
- Online or via social media
  where the concern involves a risk to children's safety or welfare.

Key Definitions

Allegation That May Meet the Harm Threshold

An allegation that an adult has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm
- Behaved in a way that may indicate they are unsuitable to work with children

Low-Level Concern

Any concern about an adult's behaviour that:

- Falls below the harm threshold
- Indicates behaviour that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct
- May undermine professional boundaries or safeguarding culture

Low-level concerns are not insignificant and must be recorded, reviewed and addressed.

ARA is committed to:

- Safeguarding children as the paramount consideration
- Acting promptly and proportionately
- Maintaining confidentiality wherever possible
- Supporting both the child/children and the adult involved
- Ensuring no adult is treated unfairly or with delay
- Promoting a culture where concerns can be raised safely

KCSIE 2026 reinforces the importance of transparent safeguarding cultures and early action where behaviour causes concern.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

- Ensures safeguarding policies are in place and effective
- Ensures procedures align with statutory guidance

Principal/Headteacher

- Manages allegations unless the concern is about them
- Liaises with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Ensures appropriate action, support and record-keeping

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) + DDSL's

- Provide safeguarding advice
- Supports information sharing and referrals
- Ensures concerns are correctly logged

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- Provides oversight for allegations that meet the harm threshold
- Advises on next steps including police or children's social care

6. Reporting Allegations and Concerns

How to Raise a Concern

Any concern about an adult must be reported immediately to:

- The Principal/Headteacher, or
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees if the allegation concerns the Headteacher

No staff member should investigate concerns themselves.

Whistleblowing

If concerns cannot be raised internally, staff should follow the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Initial Response to an Allegation

When a concern or allegation is received, the Principal/Headteacher (or Chair of Trustees) will:

1. Gather basic information (not investigate)
2. Consider whether the alleged behaviour meets the harm threshold
3. Consult the LADO **before** taking internal action if the threshold may be met

Prompt LADO consultation remains a clear statutory expectation.

Managing Allegations That Meet the Harm Threshold

If the threshold is met, the school will:

- Follow LADO guidance
- Avoid any internal investigation until professional advice is received
- Consider whether suspension or alternative arrangements are necessary
- Cooperate fully with any police or children's social care involvement

Suspension is a **neutral act** and is only used where necessary to protect children or the investigation.

Managing Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns will be:

- Reported to the Headteacher/Principal (or Chair of Trustees)
- Recorded centrally (including context and action taken)
- Addressed through supportive and proportionate measures

Possible actions include:

- Clarification of expectations
- Advice and guidance
- Reflective discussion
- Additional training or support

Patterns of low-level concerns may indicate a need to escalate or take further action.

KCSIE strengthens expectations that low-level concerns form part of wider risk assessment.

Outcomes of Allegations

Possible outcomes include:

- Unsubstantiated
- False
- Malicious
- Substantiated

Where concerns are substantiated:

- Disciplinary procedures may apply
- Referrals may be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where required

Record Keeping and Information Sharing

- All concerns, allegations and actions are recorded securely
- Records are retained on the individual's confidential file
- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis only

Data protection legislation does not prevent information sharing where safeguarding is concerned.

Support for All Parties

The school recognises that:

- Children making disclosures may need ongoing support
- Adults subject to allegations may experience significant stress

Appropriate pastoral and professional support will be provided.

Additional Information and Guidance

Reasonable Force and Physical Intervention

ARA is committed to safeguarding the welfare, dignity and human rights of all pupils and staff. We recognise that there may be rare occasions when reasonable force or physical intervention is necessary to prevent harm.

Any use of force must be:

- Lawful
- Proportionate and for the shortest time possible
- Reasonable
- Last resort
- In the best interests of the child and others

This information and guidance are informed by:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 which strengthens expectations around safeguarding culture, serious violence and decision-making clarity
- Department for Education: Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (updated guidance)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

This applies to:

- All teaching and support staff
- Supply staff
- Volunteers and authorised adults working under school direction

It applies:

- On school premises
- During off-site activities, trips and visits
- Where pupils are under the supervision or care of the school

Legal Framework

All staff have a legal power to use reasonable force under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Causing injury to themselves or others
- Causing damage to property
- Engaging in behaviour that seriously disrupts good order and discipline

The power applies regardless of age, gender, disability or educational need.

Definitions

Reasonable Force

A proportionate level of physical contact used by a trained adult to control or restrain a pupil in order to prevent harm.

Physical Intervention

A broader term referring to any physical contact used to manage challenging behaviour safely. This includes guiding, holding or restraining where necessary.

Positive Handling

A planned or trained response using safer handling techniques, often used to support pupils with additional needs.

Core Principles

ARA follows these principles at all times:

1. Physical intervention is a last resort
2. De-escalation must always be attempted first
3. Force must never be punitive
4. The minimum force necessary is used
5. Staff act to prevent harm, not to control compliance
6. Particular care is taken with children with SEND, trauma or medical needs

KCSIE reinforces the importance of clear thresholds and reflective practice when physical intervention is used.

When Reasonable Force May Be Used

Reasonable force may be used to:

- Prevent a pupil from harming themselves or others
- Stop behaviour that poses a serious and immediate risk
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Remove a child from a dangerous situation

Examples may include:

- Breaking up a physical fight
- Preventing a child running into traffic
- Stopping a pupil using an object as a weapon

When Reasonable Force Must NOT Be Used

Force must **never** be used:

- As a punishment
- To enforce compliance with instructions
- To manage low-level disruption
- Where it places a pupil at greater risk
- In a way that restricts breathing or causes pain

De-escalation and Alternatives

Staff are expected to use:

- Calm verbal intervention
- Positive behaviour strategies
- Time, space and redirection
- Use of agreed support strategies or handling plans
- Help from another adult

The school promotes early intervention and preventative support, aligning with the strengthened early help focus in KCSIE.

Pupils with SEND or Additional Needs

- Behaviour may be a form of communication
- Individual risk assessments or behaviour support plans may include agreed physical interventions
- Any planned intervention must be:
    - Proportionate
    - Reviewed regularly
    - Shared with parents/carers

KCSIE highlights the need to avoid disproportionate or repeated physical intervention with vulnerable groups.

Training

- Staff expected to use physical intervention receive appropriate training
- Training includes:
    - De-escalation
    - Safe and legal use of force
    - Understanding trauma and SEND
    - Recording and reflection

No staff member is required to place themselves at risk.

Recording and Reporting

Any use of reasonable force or physical intervention must be:

- Reported to the Principal/Headteacher or DSL as soon as possible
- Recorded in writing, including:
    - Time, location and reason
    - Who was involved
    - Type of intervention used
    - Outcome and any injuries
    - Follow-up actions

Parents/carers should be informed unless doing so poses a safeguarding risk.

Clear recording is emphasised in KCSIE 2026 to ensure transparency and learning.

Safeguarding and Allegations

- Use of force may constitute a safeguarding concern if misused
- Allegations are managed under the Allegations Against Staff Policy

The school recognises that poor practice or misuse of force may require referral to external agencies.

Post-Incident Support

ARA will ensure:

- Emotional support for pupils involved
- Opportunity for staff reflection and support
- Review of strategies or risk assessments
- Consideration of early help or additional services

Additional Information and Guidance

Data Protection and Information Sharing

(Safeguarding Context)

ARA is committed to protecting the personal data of children, families and staff, while ensuring that information is shared appropriately and lawfully to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This guidance recognises that effective information sharing is vital to safeguarding and that data protection legislation must never be a barrier to protecting a child at risk of harm.

This guidance applies to:

- All staff, volunteers and trustees
- All personal data relating to pupils, parents/carers and staff
- All safeguarding and child protection information
- All methods of data storage and sharing (paper, digital, verbal)

This guidance complies with the requirements of:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (where relevant)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (and later updates)
- ICO: *A 10-Step Guide to Sharing Information to Safeguard Children*

When sharing personal and safeguarding information, staff must follow these principles:

1. The safety and welfare of the child is paramount
2. Information sharing should be timely, proportionate and necessary
3. Data protection law supports and enables safeguarding
4. Consent is not required where sharing is necessary to protect a child from harm
5. Decisions to share (or not share) information must be clearly recorded

These principles reflect statutory safeguarding guidance

Lawful Basis for Processing and Sharing Data

The school processes and shares personal data under the following lawful bases:

Safeguarding Purposes

- Public task – exercising statutory safeguarding duties
- Legal obligation – complying with safeguarding law

- Vital interests – protecting a child from serious harm

Special category data (including health and safeguarding records) may be shared without consent where necessary to safeguard a child.

Information Sharing in Safeguarding Contexts

Information will be shared where:

- A child is at risk of harm or neglect
- Early help or child protection concerns are identified
- Information is required by statutory agencies (e.g. Children's Social Care, Police)
- A delay could place a child at increased risk

Failure to share information can be more harmful than sharing appropriately.

Who We Share Information With

- Children's Social Care
- Police
- Health professionals
- Education settings (including during pupil transitions)
- Local safeguarding partners

Information is only shared with professionals who need to know.

Consent

- Consent is not the preferred lawful basis for safeguarding information sharing
- Parental consent will be sought where appropriate, but not where this may increase risk
- Children and families will be informed of information sharing unless doing so would place a child at risk

This approach is explicitly supported in statutory guidance.

Recording and Storing Safeguarding Information

- Safeguarding records are kept separately from main pupil files
- Records are factual, dated and signed
- Access is restricted to authorised staff only
- Electronic systems are password-protected and encrypted

Good record-keeping is critical to effective safeguarding.

Data Security

The school:

- Protects data against unauthorised access or loss
- Trains staff regularly in data protection and safeguarding
- Reports personal data breaches in line with ICO requirements