



TRUST EDUCATION GROUP

Trust-Education Group Ltd

'Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility'

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025-2026

Policy Statement

At Trust-Education Group Ltd, we are committed to ensuring the safety, well-being, and protection of all individuals, particularly children, young people, and vulnerable adults, involved in our learning and training provision. We aim to provide a safe and supportive environment that promotes safeguarding at every level, adhering to national legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This policy provides clear guidance on how we will protect children and young people, including the procedures for reporting concerns and working in partnership with families, agencies, and the community.

Purpose of the Policy

The policy aims to:

- Safeguard children and young people under the age of 18 who engage with Trust-Education Group Ltd.
- Ensure all employees, volunteers, and third parties understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding.
- Promote a proactive safeguarding culture to prevent harm and abuse.
- Provide clear procedures for reporting concerns, incidents, and allegations related to child protection.
- Teach children and young people how to keep themselves safe and recognise unacceptable behaviour.
- Embed safeguarding throughout the organisation and its culture.
- Ensure compliance with the Lancashire Continuum of Need framework for identifying children in need.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees and volunteers of Trust-Education Group Ltd.
- Any third-party organisations or individuals collaborating with Trust-Education Group Ltd.
- All children and young people participating in learning, training, or activities with the organisation.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation, statutory guidance, and local safeguarding frameworks to ensure the protection and welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Trust-Education Group Ltd complies with the following:

The Children Act 1989 & 2004, which sets out the legal framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including the duty of local authorities, agencies, and professionals to cooperate in protecting children from harm.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, which provides statutory guidance on inter-agency working, emphasizing the roles and responsibilities of organisations and professionals in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This guidance highlights early intervention, multi-agency collaboration, and the continuum of need to prevent harm.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2025, which provides statutory guidance for all schools and colleges in England. This guidance outlines requirements for safeguarding policies, safer recruitment, staff training, child protection procedures, online safety, and the responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and governing bodies.

Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2023, which sets out professional standards and behaviours expected of all staff and volunteers working with children and young people.

Prevent Duty – Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which requires schools to have due regard to preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism or extremist ideologies, and to act appropriately where concerns arise.

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, which establishes FGM as illegal in the UK. Teachers have a statutory duty to report any known or suspected cases of FGM to the police immediately.

Marriage and Civil Partnership Act 2022, which makes it a criminal offence to cause someone under 18 to enter into a marriage, including forced marriage, and establishes safeguarding responsibilities for professionals.

Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children and adults, and sets out duties for professionals to safeguard those affected.

Equality Act 2010, which protects individuals from discrimination and promotes equality, ensuring all children and young people are treated fairly and safely.

Lancashire Continuum of Need, which provides a structured framework for assessing levels of need, risk, and vulnerability among children and families. Trust-Education Group Ltd follows this framework to identify early, targeted, and statutory interventions, ensuring that safeguarding actions are proportionate, effective, and in line with local multi-agency guidance.

Additional guidance and statutory advice considered in this policy includes:

- DfE guidance: *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused*
- DfE guidance: *Information sharing*
- DfE guidance: *Child sexual exploitation*
- UKCIS: *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes – advice for education settings working with children and young people*
- DfE guidance: *Working together to improve school attendance*
- DfE guidance: *Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges*
- DfE guidance: *Searching, screening, and confiscation*

This policy ensures that all Trust-Education Group Ltd staff and volunteers act in accordance with these legislative requirements and statutory guidance, maintaining a high standard of safeguarding practice, and working collaboratively with multi-agency partners to protect children and young people.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies must possess the knowledge, training, status, authority, and capacity required to carry out safeguarding responsibilities effectively. They must be provided with sufficient time, funding, training, resources, and support to fulfil their duties

DSL:

Katie Everson – Head of School Safeguarding and Pastoral

Email: katie.everson@trustededucation.group or safeguarding@trustededucation.group

Tel: 07984 173654

Deputy DSL:

Melissa Wainman – Director of Education

Email: melissa.wainman@trustededucation.group

Tel: 07984 174229

Safeguarding Governor:

Matthew Embley – Chair of Governors

Responsibilities of the DSL:

- Act as the first point of contact for all safeguarding concerns.
- Liaise with external safeguarding agencies, local authorities, and law enforcement.
- Maintain accurate records of incidents, referrals, and outcomes using CPOMS.
- Ensure staff receive regular safeguarding training.
- Attend strategy discussions, conferences, and multi-agency meetings.
- Implement statutory reporting duties, including FGM reporting to police.
- Oversee compliance with the Lancashire Continuum of Need for early intervention and safeguarding thresholds.

Definitions

Child

Any person under the age of 18. This includes all children and young people who access our education, training, or services. The definition covers children of all abilities, backgrounds, and circumstances, including those who are looked after, disabled, or have special educational needs.

Vulnerable Adult

Any person aged 18 or over who may be at risk of harm due to age, illness, disability, mental health conditions, or other factors that reduce their ability to protect themselves. Vulnerability may arise from social isolation, dependence on others, or exposure to exploitation, abuse, or neglect.

Safeguarding

The overarching process of protecting children, young people, and vulnerable adults from harm, ensuring their welfare, and promoting their development. Safeguarding includes:

- Protecting children from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Ensuring children have access to safe and supportive learning environments.
- Promoting the physical, emotional, mental, and online safety of children.
- Teaching children to recognise risks and make safe choices.
- Preventing radicalisation, extremism, and harmful influences, including online manipulation and generative AI risks.
- Early identification and intervention for children in need, including through frameworks such as the Lancashire Continuum of Need.

Child Protection

The set of specific actions taken to respond to and prevent abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children. Child protection includes:

- Recognising and reporting concerns of physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect, or other forms of maltreatment.
- Statutory duties such as reporting Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) to police.
- Multi-agency collaboration with social care, police, health professionals, and other statutory services.
- Acting promptly when a child is at risk of significant harm, including making Section 47 referrals where necessary.
- Ensuring the child's voice is heard, respected, and central to all decision-making.

Abuse

Any act or omission causing harm or potential harm to a child, including:

- **Physical Abuse:** Intentional or reckless acts causing physical injury or harm.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent patterns of behaviour undermining a child's sense of worth or emotional development.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Exploitation, sexual activity, or grooming involving a child.

- **Neglect:** Failure to meet a child’s basic physical, emotional, educational, or medical needs.
- **Online Abuse:** Harm or exploitation through digital platforms, including cyberbullying, online grooming, or exposure to harmful content.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Any form of abuse perpetrated by a child against another child, including sexual harassment, assault, bullying, and online abuse. Recognised as a serious safeguarding concern.

Early Help

Interventions provided when a child’s needs are identified before they escalate to statutory thresholds. Early help may involve family support, targeted interventions, or multi-agency collaboration guided by the **Lancashire Continuum of Need**.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Katie Everson

The senior staff member responsible for managing safeguarding concerns, overseeing child protection procedures, liaising with agencies, and ensuring staff are trained and aware of safeguarding responsibilities.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Coordinated processes and procedures involving schools, social care, police, health services, and other agencies to safeguard children and respond to concerns effectively.

Low-Level Concerns

Behaviour by staff or volunteers that does not meet the threshold of abuse but may indicate unsuitability, poor practice, or potential future risk. These are reported, recorded, and monitored as part of safeguarding practices.

Generative AI & Digital Safety

The safeguarding of children in the context of online tools, AI-generated content, and digital platforms. Includes teaching children digital literacy, monitoring online activity, and managing AI-related risks in educational settings.

Prevent Duty

Statutory duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism or extremist ideologies. Staff must remain vigilant to early signs of radicalisation and report concerns to the DSL.

Safeguarding Culture

An organisational commitment to prioritising child safety and well-being in all practices, policies, training, and interactions. This includes proactive risk management, professional curiosity, and embedding safeguarding across all levels.

Our Commitment to Safeguarding

Trust-Education Group Ltd is committed to:

- Treating children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Creating a safe environment that prevents harm.
- Ensuring all employees and volunteers undergo enhanced DBS checks and safeguarding training.
- Promoting the rights and views of children and young people in decision-making.
- Maintaining a culture of vigilance, professional curiosity, and proactive safeguarding.

Roles and Responsibilities

At Trust-Education Group Ltd, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers, and associated personnel have a duty to act in the best interests of children and vulnerable adults, and to adhere to statutory guidance, policy procedures, and the principles of professional safeguarding practice.

All Staff and Volunteers Must:

Recognise Signs of Abuse or Neglect:

Be vigilant for indicators of physical, emotional, sexual abuse, or neglect.

Recognise less obvious or emerging forms of abuse, including:

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Honour-based violence (HBV)
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Radicalisation or extremism
- Trafficking and modern slavery

- Child-on-child abuse, including sexualised behaviours
- Online risks such as cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and AI-generated manipulation.

Report Concerns Promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Katie Everson or DDSL Melissa Wainman

- Record all concerns factually and without interpretation using CPOMS or equivalent systems.
- Escalate concerns immediately where a child is at risk of significant harm, including direct referral to Children’s Social Care or police if necessary.
- Understand statutory obligations, including mandatory reporting of FGM to the police.

Act in the Best Interests of the Child at All Times:

- Ensure that all decisions, actions, and interactions prioritise the safety,

Categories of Abuse

Physical Abuse involves any intentional act that causes physical harm or injury to a child. This can be inflicted by a parent, caregiver, or another adult and may result from excessive discipline, hitting, shaking, burning, or other forms of physical harm. It may also include fabricated or induced illness, where a caregiver deliberately causes or reports illness in a child. Physical abuse may leave visible injuries such as bruises, burns, fractures, or bite marks, but it can also occur without obvious signs. Children who experience physical abuse may demonstrate fear of adults, reluctance to return home, or attempts to hide injuries. Staff must be vigilant in recognising patterns of repeated or unexplained injuries, record them accurately and factually, and report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), escalating concerns where the child may be at imminent risk.

Emotional Abuse is characterised by persistent behaviours that damage a child’s emotional well-being, self-esteem, or development. This form of abuse may occur in isolation or alongside other types of abuse. Examples include constant criticism, humiliation, rejection, threats, or exposure to domestic violence. Children subjected to emotional abuse may show signs of anxiety, withdrawal, low self-esteem, difficulties in forming relationships, or age-inappropriate behaviours. They may also present with mental health difficulties, including self-harm, depression, or eating disorders. Staff have a duty to maintain supportive, nurturing relationships, encourage children to express

feelings and concerns, and recognise and respond to early indicators of emotional distress, ensuring that children feel safe and valued in their learning environment.

Sexual Abuse occurs when a child is used for sexual gratification, either directly or indirectly, by an adult or an older child. This abuse may involve contact, such as inappropriate touching or sexual acts, or non-contact, such as exposure to sexual content, pornography, grooming, or online sexual exploitation. Children subjected to sexual abuse may display sexualised behaviours beyond their developmental age, fear certain individuals, withdraw socially, or exhibit physical signs such as injuries to the genital or anal area. Staff must respond sensitively to any disclosures using the TED method (Tell, Explain, Describe), avoid asking leading questions, and immediately refer concerns to the DSL while maintaining confidentiality and protecting the integrity of the child's disclosure.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that some children may display harmful sexual behaviour. Concerns will be managed through safeguarding procedures, risk assessment, early intervention, and referral to specialist services where appropriate. Trust-Education Group may utilise recognised resources and support services, including those referenced in national safeguarding guidance, to support children displaying or affected by harmful sexual behaviour

Neglect is the persistent failure to provide for a child's basic physical, emotional, educational, or medical needs. This can include inadequate food, clothing, shelter, or supervision, as well as failure to provide necessary medical care, education, or emotional support. Children who are neglected may present with poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing, malnutrition, delayed development, or social withdrawal. Repeated absences from school or persistent developmental delays may also indicate neglect. Staff must monitor attendance patterns, recognise signs of neglect, report concerns to the DSL promptly, and work collaboratively with multi-agency partners to support the child and family where appropriate.

Online Abuse encompasses harmful behaviours that occur via digital platforms, including cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, online grooming, and manipulation. Children may be coerced, intimidated, or exploited through messaging, social media, gaming platforms, or video communication. Signs of online abuse can

include anxiety, withdrawal, secretive behaviour around devices, or evidence of contact with unknown individuals. Staff must educate children about digital safety, monitor online activity through robust filtering and supervision systems, and report any concerns immediately to the DSL, ensuring that online risks are addressed as part of the wider safeguarding framework.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a specific form of sexual abuse where children are manipulated or coerced into sexual activity in exchange for gifts, money, status, or affection. CSE often involves grooming and may include online exploitation or physical trafficking. Children at risk of CSE may display unexplained possessions, frequent absences, sexualised behaviour, or withdrawal from family and education. Staff have a responsibility to recognise the signs of exploitation, respond sensitively to disclosures, and report concerns immediately to the DSL, Children's Social Care, or the police, providing support while maintaining the child's safety and confidentiality.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) refers to all procedures involving the partial or total removal of female genitalia for non-medical reasons. FGM is illegal in the UK and recognised as a serious form of abuse with long-term physical and psychological consequences. Teachers have a statutory duty to report any known or suspected cases of FGM to the police immediately. Signs may include difficulty walking or sitting, recurrent urinary infections, emotional withdrawal, or absence from school. Staff must follow safeguarding procedures without investigating, ensure concerns are reported immediately to the DSL and police, and support the child appropriately.

Honour-Based Violence (HBV) occurs when individuals are harmed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community. HBV can involve physical violence, threats, emotional abuse, or forced marriage. Children at risk may demonstrate fearfulness, reluctance to return home, withdrawal from education, or unexplained injuries. Staff are required to recognise HBV as abuse, report concerns promptly to the DSL, and work closely with multi-agency partners to safeguard the child, ensuring that victims receive protection and support.

Radicalisation and Extremism involve children being influenced to adopt extremist ideologies, potentially leading to terrorism or harmful behaviours. Children at risk may display sudden changes in behaviour, isolation from peers, adoption of extremist views, or exposure to radical content online. Staff must be alert to these indicators, report concerns to the DSL and Prevent channels, and collaborate with parents and safeguarding partners to provide interventions that promote resilience, critical thinking, and a secure sense of belonging.

Trafficking and Modern Slavery refer to the recruitment, transportation, and exploitation of children for sexual, criminal, domestic, or labour purposes. Trafficked children may be moved within the UK or internationally and often experience severe abuse, coercion, and deprivation of rights. Signs may include frequent absences, fearfulness, signs of control, or possession of unexplained goods or money. Staff are required to report concerns immediately to the DSL and statutory agencies, provide support to the child, and collaborate with law enforcement and social care services to ensure the child's safety.

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises the role of **Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTGs)** in safeguarding children identified as potential victims of trafficking, modern slavery, or exploitation. ICTGs are appointed to:

- Advocate for the child's best interests in all decisions relating to care, accommodation, and education.
- Support communication with statutory agencies, social care, and law enforcement.
- Ensure the child's views are heard and considered in planning and decision-making.
- Monitor welfare, safety, and access to health, education, and legal services.

Staff must cooperate with ICTGs by sharing relevant safeguarding information and providing timely updates regarding the child's attendance, engagement, and wellbeing. Any concerns regarding the child's safety must be reported immediately to the DSL and ICTG.

Forced Marriage occurs when a child is compelled to marry without full consent, through coercion, duress, or threats. Children may display anxiety, withdrawal, fear of family expectations, or disengagement from education. Forced marriage is illegal under UK law, including for children under 18, and constitutes abuse. Staff must recognise signs of forced marriage, report concerns immediately to the DSL and relevant authorities, and ensure that children are protected in line with statutory guidance.

Child-on-Child Abuse encompasses abuse between children, including physical, sexual, emotional, or online abuse. This includes bullying, sexual harassment, assault, initiation rituals, and online exploitation. Children may present with physical injuries, self-harm, withdrawal, or behavioural changes. Staff are responsible for taking all reports seriously, acting promptly, recording concerns factually, and referring them to the DSL. A culture of respect and safety must be promoted, ensuring that all children

understand appropriate boundaries and have access to trusted adults to disclose concerns.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where there is an imbalance of power. It can take many forms, including **physical, verbal, emotional, and online (cyberbullying)**, and may involve prejudice-based harassment, discrimination, or targeting of children with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that bullying can have serious and long-lasting effects on a child's emotional, social, and educational development, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and difficulties forming healthy relationships.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for identifying and responding to bullying incidents promptly and effectively. Trust-Education Group Ltd maintains a clear **Anti-Bullying Policy**, which sets out procedures for reporting, investigating, and resolving bullying incidents. Staff must create a safe and supportive environment in which children feel confident to report bullying, whether they are victims, witnesses, or perpetrators. The organisation's approach includes promoting positive behaviour, teaching children strategies for conflict resolution, and supporting bystanders to act responsibly.

Bullying may sometimes be linked to broader safeguarding concerns, such as child-on-child abuse, online exploitation, radicalisation, or mental health issues. Staff are trained to recognise these connections and to escalate concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. Trust-Education Group Ltd also works closely with parents, carers, and external agencies to provide consistent support, ensure timely interventions, and protect every child's safety, well-being, and rights.

Child Knife Possession Offences

Trust-Education Group Ltd adopts a zero-tolerance approach to knife possession offences involving children. Possession of knives or bladed items by pupils, whether on school premises, in transit, or online, constitutes a serious safeguarding concern.

The policy includes:

- Immediate reporting of any suspicion or discovery of knife possession to the DSL and local police.

- Ensuring the child is separated safely from peers while maintaining supervision and dignity.
- Prompt engagement with parents or guardians, unless doing so may increase risk.
- Referral to multi-agency partners, including social care, to assess wider risk factors such as gang involvement or exploitation.
- Recording incidents in CPOMS, including actions taken and outcomes.

Staff receive training on recognising signs of potential knife or weapon possession, the risks associated with child involvement in criminal activity, and effective de-escalation strategies. Trust-Education Group Ltd works with local authorities and police initiatives to prevent knife-related harm and provide education on personal safety.

Learning from Serious Child Safeguarding Incidents

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises the importance of learning from serious child safeguarding incidents to continuously improve safeguarding practice and protect children and young people.

All serious incidents, including those involving harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children and young people, must be reported promptly. Notifications should be made even if the names of child victims are not yet known, to ensure that early assessment and intervention can occur. All children potentially affected should be included in the notification, and the wider context of the incident must be considered, including family circumstances, social environment, and any systemic factors that may have contributed to the harm.

This section clarifies responsibilities for specific cases, including the death of a care leaver up to and including the age of 24. It also provides guidance for notifying incidents involving adults aged 18 or over where harm, abuse, or neglect occurred in childhood but was not previously reported or known. In such cases, Trust-Education Group Ltd will cooperate with local safeguarding partners to ensure appropriate notification, investigation, and support are provided.

The policy confirms that the decision to undertake a **National Review** rests solely with the **Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel**. The sequence of action following a serious incident notification (SIN) includes submission of the notification, rapid review, and, where necessary, a local child safeguarding practice review. Rapid reviews may be shared with government departments in exceptional circumstances to support national learning and policy development.

Where incidents do not meet the criteria for formal notification, Trust-Education Group Ltd remains committed to ensuring learning is captured and applied. All incidents, near misses, or low-level serious concerns are reviewed internally, and lessons learned are disseminated through staff briefings, training sessions, and updates from the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

The rapid review timeline has been updated to require submission within **15 working days** of the serious incident notification. Trust-Education Group Ltd ensures that all relevant staff, including DSLs, safeguarding governors, and senior leadership, are aware of these timelines and follow the process diligently to ensure timely investigation, learning, and improvements in safeguarding practice.

By embedding this process into policy and practice, Trust-Education Group Ltd demonstrates its commitment to a culture of accountability, continuous improvement, and proactive safeguarding, ensuring that all incidents inform future preventative measures and contribute to the protection and welfare of children and young people.

Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE)

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE) is a statutory part of education in England and an essential element of safeguarding children and young people. RSHE equips pupils with the knowledge, skills, values, and confidence to make safe and informed decisions about their relationships, health, and well-being, both online and offline. Our RSHE provision follows statutory requirements, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2026) and the updated Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026). RSHE is delivered through a carefully sequenced curriculum, assemblies, pastoral sessions, and enrichment activities, tailored to the age, developmental stage, and individual needs of our learners.

RSHE at Trust-Education Group covers key safeguarding, health, and relationship topics. Pupils learn to recognise abuse, exploitation, coercion, and unsafe situations, including online risks, peer-on-peer abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), forced marriage, FGM, radicalisation, and emerging threats from digital technologies such as generative AI. Pupils are empowered to seek help safely and understand which trusted adults they can approach. Lessons focus on teaching healthy relationships, consent, respect, boundaries, and positive family and peer relationships. Pupils are supported to identify manipulative or controlling behaviours and to communicate assertively about their needs and boundaries.

Online safety and digital literacy are integrated into RSHE, addressing cyberbullying, online grooming, exposure to inappropriate content, misinformation, and AI-related risks. Pupils develop critical digital literacy skills, learning to evaluate information and identify manipulative or harmful online content. RSHE also covers physical and mental health, including personal hygiene, mental well-being, emotional regulation, stress management, healthy lifestyle choices, and coping strategies for loss or change. The curriculum promotes inclusivity and diversity, emphasising respect for all individuals, including considerations of gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion, and socio-economic background. Pupils with additional vulnerabilities are supported in line with statutory guidance.

Trust-Education Group believes in close partnership with parents and carers in delivering RSHE. Parents are informed about the RSHE curriculum and the content to be delivered. In line with statutory guidance, parents have the right to request the withdrawal of their child from specific components of sex education, excluding elements that fall under statutory health education. Withdrawal requests must be made in writing to the Head of School, and the school will discuss the request with parents to ensure understanding of the curriculum and safeguarding context. Pupils who are withdrawn from certain lessons will continue to receive the full safeguarding and health education provision.

RSHE is closely aligned with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, online safety procedures, and pastoral care. Lessons reinforce the rights of children, the mechanisms for reporting abuse, and the skills needed to stay safe in different contexts. Updates from KCSiE 2026 place greater emphasis on online harms, misinformation, scams, and digital manipulation. Pupils are taught correct anatomical terminology to reduce stigma and support safeguarding. Education on personal safety in everyday contexts, enhanced focus on sexual harassment, consent, coercion, and exploitation, and guidance on supporting gender-questioning children are all integral to the curriculum.

All staff involved in delivering RSHE receive regular training to ensure they can teach sensitive topics effectively, respond to disclosures safely, and uphold safeguarding standards. The full RSHE Policy, available on the Trust Education Group website, provides detailed information on curriculum content, teaching methodology, assessment, and parental rights, ensuring consistency and alignment with safeguarding obligations.

Mental Health and Safeguarding

All staff should be aware that mental health concerns can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, exploitation, or trauma. While only appropriately trained professionals should diagnose mental health conditions, staff should identify concerns early, record observations, and refer concerns through safeguarding processes. Trust-Education group adopts a whole-setting approach to promoting emotional wellbeing, resilience, and positive mental health.

Guidance on Supporting Gender Questioning Children

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that some children may be exploring their gender identity or questioning their sexual orientation. Supporting these pupils safely and respectfully is a critical aspect of safeguarding and pastoral care. The Department for Education, in line with KCSiE 2026 and recent statutory updates, emphasises that schools and educational settings should take a cautious, individualised approach to children who are questioning their gender, ensuring their safety, well-being, and inclusion at all times.

Staff are trained to respond sensitively to children who express uncertainty about their gender identity, avoiding assumptions or oversimplified language. Pupils are supported through open dialogue, pastoral care, and, where appropriate, referral to specialist support services. Staff are aware of potential vulnerabilities, including increased risks of bullying, mental health difficulties, self-harm, online exploitation, and peer-on-peer abuse, which may disproportionately affect gender-questioning pupils.

The policy follows the government guidance that parents or carers should usually be involved in discussions regarding their child's gender questioning. However, in exceptional circumstances, involving parents could place the child at risk of harm. In such cases, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will work with safeguarding partners and specialist services to ensure that the child's welfare remains the priority, while complying with safeguarding obligations and confidentiality standards.

Trust-Education Group ensures that curriculum content, pastoral care, and safeguarding procedures reflect inclusivity and respect for all pupils, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. Staff are trained to use correct names and pronouns, and to foster a school culture where all pupils feel safe and supported. Guidance is integrated across RSHE, anti-bullying programmes, and online safety education to address harassment, discrimination, or abuse related to gender identity.

The Trust also aligns its practice with the latest guidance from the government and local safeguarding partners, ensuring that all staff are aware of the signs that a child may be at risk due to gender questioning vulnerabilities. This includes monitoring mental health, safeguarding concerns, peer interactions, and external influences, while promoting a culture where pupils can access trusted adults to discuss their concerns safely. Staff work in partnership with parents, carers, and external agencies when appropriate, and always prioritise the child's safety, rights, and well-being.

All gender-questioning support practices are reviewed regularly to remain compliant with updates to KCSiE 2026, Working Together 2026, and national guidance on inclusivity, safeguarding, and the well-being of vulnerable children. The Trust ensures that any intervention, support plan, or curriculum adaptation is evidence-based, trauma-informed, and documented appropriately, in line with child protection record-keeping procedures.

Children in Kinship Care

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that children living in kinship care arrangements may experience additional vulnerabilities and safeguarding challenges. Staff will ensure that these children receive appropriate support and that their educational, emotional, and safeguarding needs are considered. Trust-Education Group will work collaboratively with Virtual School Heads and relevant agencies where appropriate.

Children with Family Members in Prison

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that children who have a parent or family member in prison may face a range of emotional, social, and educational challenges. These children are at increased risk of experiencing stress, anxiety, social stigma, attachment difficulties, and disruptions in their daily routines. As part of our safeguarding commitment, the Trust ensures that these children are identified and offered appropriate pastoral support to promote their well-being and resilience.

Staff are trained to respond sensitively to disclosures about family members in prison, maintaining confidentiality while ensuring the child's safety and welfare. Pastoral support includes providing a safe space for children to discuss their feelings, offering access to counselling or mentoring services, and linking families with specialist support organisations such as **Action for Prisoners' Families**. Pupils may be given information about age-appropriate resources, including guidance on coping strategies, emotional support, and understanding the legal circumstances of their family member.

Trust-Education Group Ltd also considers the broader safeguarding context for these children. Prolonged or repeated absences from school, behavioural changes, or signs of emotional distress may indicate additional vulnerabilities that require timely intervention. Staff are expected to report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) promptly so that multi-agency support, including social services and local safeguarding partners, can be mobilised if required.

All interventions are personalised, taking into account the child's age, emotional needs, and family circumstances. Trust-Education Group works closely with parents, carers, and external agencies to ensure a coordinated approach that prioritises the child's best interests. This approach aligns with the KCSiE 2026 guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, and local authority safeguarding frameworks, ensuring that children with family members in prison are protected, supported, and included in all aspects of school life.

Regular monitoring and review of these children's welfare is undertaken to ensure that interventions remain appropriate and effective, with updates recorded securely in line with safeguarding procedures. By providing this tailored support, Trust-Education Group Ltd aims to mitigate the potential negative impact of parental imprisonment and ensure that every child feels safe, valued, and supported within the educational environment.

Absence from School and Children Missing Education (CME)

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that unexplained or prolonged absence from school can be a key indicator of potential safeguarding concerns, including neglect, abuse, exploitation, or other vulnerabilities. All absences are treated seriously and monitored closely to ensure that children remain safe and engaged in education.

Staff are responsible for promptly reporting any patterns of absence or unexplained absence to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will liaise with parents or carers to identify the reason for absence, ensuring that communication is sensitive and non-judgmental while prioritising the child's welfare. In cases where a child is absent without explanation or at risk, the DSL will follow statutory procedures in line with local authority guidance and the KCSiE 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 frameworks.

Children who are persistently absent or have prolonged periods of non-attendance may be classified as Children Missing Education (CME). CME refers to children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll or receiving a suitable education, either in school, alternative provision, or through home education, and whose

whereabouts are unknown. Identifying CME is critical, as these children are particularly vulnerable to neglect, exploitation, criminal activity, and online harm.

Trust-Education Group Ltd works closely with local authorities, attendance teams, and safeguarding partners to locate children missing from education. The school maintains up-to-date contact details, emergency contacts, and addresses for all pupils and ensures that transitions between educational settings are managed safely. Where concerns arise, the DSL will escalate cases promptly to the local authority and, if necessary, other statutory agencies, following established referral procedures.

Parents and carers are expected to inform the school of reasons for absence, and the Trust encourages regular communication to prevent misunderstandings and ensure a child's safety. Where there are concerns that parental engagement is not forthcoming, or a child is at risk, appropriate multi-agency interventions will be initiated.

In line with safeguarding best practice, staff are trained to recognise that absence can be a warning sign of broader issues, including mental health difficulties, family breakdown, exploitation, radicalisation, or involvement in criminal activity. Absence monitoring, timely intervention, and collaboration with external agencies help mitigate risks and ensure that every child receives the education, care, and protection they are entitled to.

Trust-Education Group Ltd's Attendance Policy complements this safeguarding approach, outlining procedures for reporting, monitoring, and addressing pupil absences, including escalation routes for persistent or unexplained absence. This ensures a proactive, child-centred approach to preventing harm and supporting vulnerable children.

Attendance and Safeguarding

Trust-Education Group recognises that persistent absence, severe absence, and poor attendance may be indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental health concerns, criminal exploitation, or wider safeguarding vulnerabilities. Attendance information will be reviewed alongside safeguarding information to identify emerging concerns and ensure timely intervention. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely with attendance leads and external agencies where attendance concerns may indicate safeguarding risk.

Online Safety and Generative AI

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that the digital world presents both significant opportunities and serious risks for children and young people. The Trust is committed to ensuring that pupils are educated, supported, and safeguarded in their use of digital technologies, online platforms, and generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools.

Children and young people are taught to recognise a wide range of online risks, including exposure to harmful or inappropriate content, cyberbullying, grooming, radicalisation, misinformation, disinformation, and manipulative AI-generated content. This includes understanding the difference between factual information and false or misleading material, developing the critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate digital content, and learning how to report concerns safely. Lessons and assemblies incorporate practical strategies to identify online manipulation, digital scams, and algorithm-driven content that may influence beliefs or behaviours.

Misinformation, Disinformation and Conspiracy Theories

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories and manipulated online content can present safeguarding risks to children and young people. Pupils are taught to critically evaluate information sources, identify false or misleading content, recognise online manipulation, and understand how harmful narratives may contribute to radicalisation, prejudice, emotional harm, or unsafe behaviours. Staff receive training on identifying concerns relating to online misinformation and reporting concerns through safeguarding procedures.

ICT systems within Trust-Education Group Ltd are appropriately filtered and monitored to restrict access to harmful material. This includes safeguarding against access to violent, sexual, extremist, or otherwise inappropriate content. Monitoring systems are regularly reviewed to ensure they are effective and responsive to emerging online threats, including content generated by AI tools or third-party platforms.

Trust-Education Group Ltd will implement and regularly review cyber security arrangements in accordance with Department for Education guidance and Cyber Security Standards for Schools and Colleges. This includes secure passwords, multi-factor authentication where appropriate, secure backup arrangements, software updates, device management, and staff awareness training to reduce safeguarding and data security risks.

Annual Filtering and Monitoring Review

The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team will review the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems at least annually. Reviews will include checks that filtering is functioning correctly across all internet-enabled devices, networks and locations used by pupils. Records of these reviews will be maintained, reported and discussed with the safeguarding team and with the governing body.

Staff are trained to identify, assess, and respond to online safety concerns, including those relating to the use of generative AI. This includes understanding the potential for pupils or staff to use AI tools in ways that create safeguarding risks, such as generating misleading messages, creating false images, or producing content that could be harmful to themselves or others. Clear guidance and protocols are in place for managing unauthorized or unsafe use of AI tools, including reporting mechanisms to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and escalation to external agencies when necessary.

Digital literacy and critical thinking are embedded across the curriculum, ensuring that children learn to navigate online environments safely and responsibly. This includes understanding privacy settings, the permanence of digital content, safe communication practices, and strategies to protect personal information. Pupils are encouraged to question sources, identify bias, and develop resilience against manipulation or coercion online.

Trust-Education Group Ltd ensures that online safety is a key component of safeguarding, integrated into policies, staff training, and pupil education.

Trust-Education Group Ltd also monitors trends and emerging risks in technology and AI to update procedures, risk assessments, and teaching materials accordingly.

Multi-Agency Working

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that safeguarding is most effective when it is a collaborative, multi-agency effort. The welfare of children and young people is everyone's responsibility, and the Trust is committed to working in partnership with statutory agencies, voluntary organisations, and other relevant bodies to ensure that children are protected from harm and supported to achieve positive outcomes.

The Trust maintains close working relationships with key safeguarding partners, including the **Lancashire MASH Team (0300 123 6720)** and the **Blackburn with Darwen MASH Team (01254 666400)**. In addition, we liaise with local **police services**,

the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**, health services, social care, mental health providers, and other specialist agencies. These partnerships ensure that concerns are assessed promptly, information is shared appropriately, and children receive the right level of support and protection. Staff are trained to understand the thresholds for involvement with different agencies and to act promptly when concerns arise.

Trust-Education Group Ltd follows the **Lancashire Continuum of Need**, a framework used to assess the level of risk or need for a child. The Continuum provides guidance on identifying whether a child requires early help, targeted support, or statutory intervention. Staff are trained to recognise indicators at each level, including early signs of neglect, emotional distress, or risk-taking behaviours. This framework ensures that children and families receive timely and proportionate interventions, reducing the likelihood of harm escalating.

All low-level concerns, including behaviours that may indicate a potential risk to children but do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention, are recorded meticulously. These concerns may include minor safeguarding issues, worries raised by parents, changes in pupil behaviour, or incidents reported in school that indicate a child may be experiencing stress or harm. Staff report these concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who evaluates the information, documents it securely, and determines whether multi-agency discussion or intervention is required.

Where appropriate, low-level concerns are escalated through **multi-agency meetings**, such as **Team Around the Child (TAC)** meetings, early help assessments, or strategy discussions. These forums allow professionals from different services to share information, coordinate responses, and develop joint action plans to safeguard the child. The Trust ensures that all relevant information is shared lawfully and ethically, balancing the child's right to confidentiality with the need to protect them from harm.

Regular communication with multi-agency partners allows Trust-Education Group Ltd to monitor progress, review interventions, and ensure that safeguarding measures remain effective. Staff attend meetings, contribute reports, and provide updates to external agencies, ensuring the child's voice is central to decision-making processes.

Trust-Education Group Ltd also recognises that multi-agency working extends to families, carers, and community organisations. Parents and carers are supported and guided through safeguarding processes, and when necessary, information about services, support programmes, and interventions is shared. Early engagement with families helps to address concerns before they escalate, while ensuring that statutory obligations are met.

By embedding multi-agency working into everyday practice, Trust-Education Group Ltd ensures that safeguarding is proactive, comprehensive, and responsive.

Low-Level Concerns

At Trust-Education Group Ltd, we recognise that safeguarding is not limited to serious incidents of abuse or neglect. Low-level concerns, which are behaviours that do not meet the threshold for child protection intervention but may indicate inappropriate conduct, a lapse in professional judgement, or undermine the professional standards expected of staff, must be taken seriously and addressed promptly.

Low-level concerns are defined as any behaviour by a member of staff, volunteer, or third-party adult that is inconsistent with the Trust's professional expectations, guidance, or code of conduct, but does not constitute an immediate safeguarding risk. Examples include being overly familiar with children, making inappropriate jokes, minor breaches of trust, or unprofessional interactions that fall short of harm. While these behaviours are not immediately harmful, they have the potential to erode trust, compromise professional boundaries, or indicate a need for further monitoring or support.

All low-level concerns must be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Reports are made confidentially, with the understanding that all concerns will be treated seriously and without fear of reprisal. Staff are encouraged to share concerns even if they are unsure whether the behaviour is significant, as early reporting ensures timely review and intervention.

Once reported, low-level concerns are logged securely, including details such as the individual involved, date, nature of the concern, and any context or witnesses. The DSL, in consultation with safeguarding governors and senior leadership, monitors these records to identify patterns, trends, or repeated behaviours that may require additional action, support, or training.

Where appropriate, Trust-Education Group Ltd use low-level concern records to provide additional training or guidance to the individual involved, implement mentoring, supervision, or coaching to prevent escalation, or escalate concerns to multi-agency forums if patterns indicate potential risk beyond the organisation.

Low-level concerns are reviewed regularly by the DSL and safeguarding governors to ensure that all staff demonstrate professional standards and that the environment remains safe for children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Confidentiality is maintained throughout, and all actions are documented to provide transparency and accountability.

This proactive approach supports a culture of vigilance and continuous improvement, ensuring that even minor lapses are addressed appropriately, lessons are learned, and children are kept safe.

Reporting Concerns

At Trust-Education Group Ltd, all staff and volunteers have a responsibility to act immediately if they have any concern about a child's welfare. Any suspicion, observation, or disclosure of abuse, neglect, or exploitation must be recorded promptly and accurately using CPOMS, ensuring that the details include the date, time, location, people involved, and the nature of the concern. This record serves as the official documentation of the concern and must be completed as soon as possible to ensure accuracy and timeliness of the information.

All concerns must be reported without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL is responsible for assessing the concern, determining the appropriate course of action, and, where necessary, liaising with external safeguarding partners. In cases where a child is at immediate risk of harm, staff understand that they must not wait to report the concern internally and should contact the police or Children's Social Care directly. Staff are expected to use professional judgment and follow statutory guidance to safeguard the child effectively.

Staff and volunteers are required to cooperate fully with any multi-agency investigations that may follow, including providing statements, attending meetings, and sharing relevant information with external agencies in line with statutory guidance. All actions taken must prioritise the welfare of the child and adhere to the principles outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2026.

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times. Information relating to a concern should only be shared on a need-to-know basis, ensuring that the child's privacy and safety are protected, and that the integrity of any ongoing investigation is not compromised. Staff must not discuss concerns with colleagues outside the safeguarding framework, with parents, or with anyone who does not have a legitimate role in managing the concern.

By following these procedures, Trust-Education Group Ltd ensures that all safeguarding concerns are addressed swiftly, appropriately, and in accordance with statutory requirements, thereby maintaining a safe and supportive environment for children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Data Protection and Safeguarding Information Sharing

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information where there are safeguarding concerns. Information will be shared lawfully, proportionately, and in accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance, ensuring that the welfare of the child remains paramount. Staff will follow Department for Education guidance regarding safeguarding records, confidentiality, and information sharing.

Operation Encompass

Trust-Education Group Ltd participates in Operation Encompass, a partnership with local police forces to support children who experience or witness domestic abuse. Under this initiative, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is notified before the start of the school day if a child has been exposed to domestic abuse in their home.

The purpose of Operation Encompass is to ensure that staff can respond appropriately and promptly, providing immediate pastoral support and creating a safe environment for children to discuss their experiences if they wish. All information received through Operation Encompass is treated confidentially and shared only with those who need to know, in line with safeguarding protocols. Strategies are implemented to minimise the impact of trauma on learning, behaviour, and wellbeing, ensuring that children continue to feel safe and supported in school.

Staff receive regular training on responding sensitively and effectively to disclosures arising from Operation Encompass notifications. The DSL ensures that records of notifications, interventions, and follow-up actions are maintained securely and reviewed regularly to monitor effectiveness.

The **Operation Encompass Lead** for Trust-Education Group Ltd is **Katie Everson**, who is responsible for liaising with the local police, coordinating support for children, and ensuring that all staff are informed and trained appropriately regarding the initiative.

Communicating with Children – CSA Centre Guidance

Trust-Education Group Ltd recognises that effective, sensitive communication with children is central to safeguarding and promoting their wellbeing. All staff and volunteers are trained to interact with children in a way that encourages trust, ensures safety, and allows children to disclose concerns without fear or pressure.

Staff are required to use age-appropriate, non-leading language, asking open-ended questions that allow children to tell, explain, and describe their experiences. For example, prompts may include: *“Can you tell me what happened?”* or *“How did that make you feel?”* Staff avoid asking questions that could influence a child’s account, and once sufficient information has been gathered to assess risk, no further probing should occur.

All communication is carried out with the child’s best interests at heart, ensuring their emotional and physical safety. Staff listen actively, validate feelings, and respond calmly and empathetically. Where necessary, children are provided with a quiet, private space to discuss concerns, away from peers or adults who are not part of the safeguarding process.

The guidance also emphasises that staff should:

- Maintain professional boundaries while showing warmth and reassurance.
- Avoid making promises regarding outcomes or confidentiality that cannot be kept.
- Document conversations immediately and accurately in CPOMS or equivalent safeguarding records, including the child’s words, context, date, and time.
- Consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead promptly to ensure concerns are escalated appropriately and any required referrals to external agencies are made.

All staff and volunteers receive training on CSA Centre guidance, ensuring that communication with children is consistent, safe, and in line with statutory safeguarding requirements. The approach is child-centred, trauma-informed, and designed to empower children while protecting their rights and welfare.

Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

Trust-Education Group Ltd is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding and professional conduct. All allegations or concerns regarding the behaviour of staff, volunteers, or associated personnel must be taken seriously, promptly addressed, and managed in accordance with statutory guidance.

An allegation may arise when a member of staff, volunteer, or associated personnel is suspected of:

- Causing harm, or posing a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult
- Engaging in behaviour that contravenes the professional standards of the Trust
- Engaging in inappropriate conduct or abuse of trust

- Breaching safeguarding policies or procedures

All staff and volunteers have a duty to report any such concerns immediately. Reporting must never be delayed, even if the suspicion is minor or uncertain. Early reporting helps to protect children, the organisation, and staff themselves.

If the concern involves a member of staff or volunteer, it should be reported immediately to the Head of School or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The Head of School or DSL will carry out a preliminary assessment and determine the appropriate course of action, which may include:

- Consulting with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Contacting the police or other statutory safeguarding agencies
- Implementing interim safeguarding measures for children if necessary
- Preserving evidence and documenting the concern carefully, factually, and objectively

Where the allegation involves the DSL or the Head of School, staff and volunteers must escalate the concern directly to the Safeguarding Governor, the Director of Education, or the LADO. This ensures an impartial and independent review of the allegation and avoids conflicts of interest.

In cases of immediate danger or risk to a child, staff and volunteers are expected to bypass internal reporting procedures and contact emergency services or local safeguarding authorities immediately.

All concerns, allegations, and investigations are treated with the utmost confidentiality. Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis to protect the safety of the child and the integrity of the investigation. Whistleblowing procedures are in place to safeguard staff and volunteers who report concerns in good faith. Trust-Education Group Ltd ensures that individuals who raise concerns in good faith will not face retaliation, discrimination, or any detriment.

Trust-Education Group Ltd also recognises the importance of supporting staff and volunteers involved in allegations. Those accused of misconduct will receive fair treatment, support, and guidance throughout the investigation process. Support may include access to counselling, legal advice, or HR support.

All allegations and low-level concerns are logged, monitored, and reviewed by the DSL, Head of School, and Safeguarding Governor to ensure lessons are learned and patterns of behaviour are identified early. Training is provided to all staff and volunteers

on recognising and reporting allegations, maintaining professional boundaries, and understanding statutory duties.

By implementing these procedures, Trust-Education Group Ltd maintains a robust and transparent safeguarding framework. This ensures children are protected, staff and volunteers are held accountable to the highest professional standards, and the organisation operates in full compliance with statutory safeguarding guidance.

Recruitment and Training

Trust-Education Group Ltd is committed to ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and associated personnel working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults are appropriately recruited, vetted, and trained to safeguard those in our care.

Recruitment procedures follow statutory guidance to ensure that only individuals with the right skills, experience, and attitudes are employed or engaged in Trust activities.

All candidates for roles that involve contact with children and young people must undergo rigorous pre-employment checks, including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, identity verification, and reference checks from previous employers or relevant authorities. Recruitment processes are designed to identify individuals who may pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults, including checking for any history of misconduct, safeguarding concerns, or criminal convictions. Volunteers are subject to the same scrutiny and safeguarding checks as paid staff to ensure a consistently safe environment.

Once appointed, all staff and volunteers undergo mandatory safeguarding induction training. This induction includes a comprehensive overview of Trust-Education Group Ltd's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**, the roles and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies, procedures for reporting concerns, and the organisation's expectations regarding professional behaviour and conduct. Staff are trained to recognise signs of abuse and neglect, understand categories of abuse, and identify emerging safeguarding risks such as online abuse, AI-related safety issues, radicalisation, child sexual exploitation (CSE), female genital mutilation (FGM), honour-based violence (HBV), trafficking, forced marriage, modern slavery, and child-on-child abuse.

Trust-Education Group Ltd is committed to continuous professional development and ensures that all staff and volunteers participate in regular refresher training. This includes updates on statutory guidance, emerging safeguarding issues, local safeguarding initiatives, and developments in national policy. Training is delivered

through multiple channels, including workshops, online modules, scenario-based learning, and briefings from the DSL. Staff are encouraged to discuss safeguarding challenges openly, reflect on case studies, and understand multi-agency working practices, including the use of the Lancashire Continuum of Need to assess and respond to varying levels of risk.

Specialist training is provided where appropriate, such as courses on online safety and digital literacy, recognising and responding to child sexual exploitation, FGM mandatory reporting, identifying signs of radicalisation, and understanding modern slavery and trafficking. Volunteers receive tailored safeguarding training to ensure that they can identify and respond appropriately to concerns while supporting children in a safe and informed manner.

Trust-Education Group Ltd also monitors the effectiveness of its recruitment and training practices through supervision, performance reviews, audits of safeguarding training completion, and annual policy reviews. By ensuring that all personnel are appropriately recruited, vetted, and continuously trained, the Trust maintains a culture of vigilance, accountability, and professional integrity, creating a safe environment where children, young people, and vulnerable adults are protected and supported.

Safeguarding Culture

Trust-Education Group Ltd is committed to fostering a strong safeguarding culture across all levels of the organisation. Safeguarding is treated as a core responsibility for all staff, volunteers, and governors, and is integrated into the everyday operation of the Trust. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item in all staff meetings and governors' meetings, ensuring that current issues, emerging risks, and policy updates are regularly reviewed and discussed. This consistent focus reinforces the Trust's commitment to protecting children, young people, and vulnerable adults and embeds safeguarding into the organisational culture.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) provide ongoing support, guidance, and training to all personnel, ensuring that staff are kept up to date with statutory guidance, emerging safeguarding trends, and local safeguarding initiatives. Regular bulletins, briefings, and training sessions are delivered to maintain awareness, promote best practice, and encourage a proactive approach to safeguarding. This ensures that staff not only understand the formal procedures but also develop the professional judgment required to identify, assess, and respond to risks effectively.

Trust-Education Group Ltd encourages all staff and volunteers to maintain professional curiosity, taking a child-centred approach in all interactions. Staff are trained to observe

and reflect on changes in behaviour, recognise subtle signs of distress, and act decisively when concerns arise. By promoting a culture of vigilance, openness, and transparency, the Trust ensures that safeguarding is viewed as a shared responsibility rather than the remit of a single individual or department. Staff are supported to raise concerns without fear of reprisal, fostering an environment in which children and young people feel safe, valued, and heard.

Through regular review, supervision, and reflective practice, Trust-Education Group Ltd continuously strengthens its safeguarding culture. The organisation is committed to embedding safeguarding principles in all aspects of its operations, from recruitment and training to daily practice and strategic planning, creating an environment where the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults is consistently prioritised.

Named Personnel with Designated Responsibility for Child Protection

Katie Everson Designated Safeguarding Lead
Head of School Safeguarding and Pastoral
Email: katie.everson@trustededucation.group
Tel: 07984173654

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Melissa Wainman
Director of Education
Email: melissa.wainman@trustededucation.group
Tel: 07984174229

Safeguarding Governor

Matthew Embley – Chair of Governors

Key Contacts

Lancashire MASH Team: 0300 123 6720
Out of Hours (Duty Team) 0300 123 6720

BwD MASH Team: 01254 666400

BwD Out of Hours Duty Team: 01254 587547

Whistleblowing Helpline – 0303 123 1113

NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline – 0800 028 0285.

Lancashire LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): 01772 536 694

LADO Out of Hours Team: 0845 0530 009

Email: LADO.admin@lancashire.gov.uk

Conclusion

Trust-Education Group Ltd is fully committed to creating and maintaining a safe, secure, and supportive environment for all children, young people, and vulnerable adults engaged in its services. We prioritise the prevention of harm and abuse through proactive safeguarding measures, clear procedures, and the promotion of awareness among staff, volunteers, learners, and families. All concerns, allegations, or suspicions are taken seriously and acted upon swiftly, ensuring that children's welfare remains central to every decision and action.

Safeguarding at Trust-Education Group Ltd is a shared responsibility. Every member of staff and volunteer has a duty to remain vigilant, act in the best interests of the child, and maintain professional curiosity at all times. We actively work in partnership with families, carers, local authorities, health services, social care, law enforcement, and other safeguarding partners to ensure a coordinated, multi-agency approach to protecting children.

The Trust recognises that children's voices must be heard and their perspectives respected. Children and young people are encouraged to participate in decisions affecting their welfare and safety, and are taught how to recognise risks and protect themselves, including in online and digital contexts. Parents and carers are provided with guidance, support, and information about safeguarding practices, including their rights and responsibilities, such as consent for certain interventions and the right to withdraw from specific elements of statutory education programmes, in line with RSHE policy requirements.

Trust-Education Group Ltd fosters a culture of continuous learning and reflection, ensuring staff and volunteers receive regular training and updates on emerging safeguarding risks, statutory guidance, and best practices. Policies are regularly

reviewed and refined to reflect legislative changes, government guidance, and lessons learned from internal and external audits.

Ultimately, safeguarding is embedded in all aspects of the Trust's work, creating an environment where children, young people, and vulnerable adults can learn, grow, and thrive safely. By maintaining a vigilant, informed, and collaborative approach, Trust-Education Group Ltd demonstrates its unwavering commitment to protecting those in its care, promoting their well-being, and ensuring they are treated with respect, dignity, and compassion.

Review of Policy

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it remains comprehensive, effective, and fully aligned with current legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice. In addition to the scheduled annual review, the policy will be updated immediately in response to any significant changes in statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements, or emerging safeguarding risks.

All changes and updates to the policy are communicated promptly to all staff, volunteers, governors, and relevant external stakeholders to ensure clarity and consistency in safeguarding practices. Staff and volunteers are required to read and acknowledge updates, ensuring they remain fully informed of any procedural changes, emerging risks, or amendments to reporting protocols.

The review process also considers lessons learned from internal audits, safeguarding incidents, complaints, and feedback from multi-agency partners, including the Lancashire Continuum of Need and local safeguarding boards. Recommendations from external inspections, safeguarding audits, and statutory reviews are incorporated into the policy to continuously improve practice and maintain a proactive safeguarding culture.

Trust-Education Group Ltd maintains records of all policy reviews, amendments, and staff acknowledgements to demonstrate accountability and compliance with statutory requirements. By regularly reviewing and refining this policy, the Trust ensures that safeguarding procedures remain robust, dynamic, and responsive to the changing needs of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Policy Lead	Katie Everson Head of School & Designated safeguarding Lead
Date:	27th March 2026
Policy Review Date:	March 2026
Version:	2
Approval:	Trust-Education Group Board of Governors

