Boston Pioneers Academy

Site Specific Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Monitoring Responsibility	Head Teacher
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Approval Signature	

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1. A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

The purpose of Boston Pioneers Academy's Safeguarding Policy is to ensure every child who is a registered pupil at the academy is safe and protected from harm. This means the academy will always work to:

- provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protect children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- prevent impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensure children at the academy grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- promote the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children;
- take action to enable children and young people at the academy to have the best outcomes.
- we will always act in the best interests of the child; children include everyone under the age of 18.

The academy recognises child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online. The academy recognises its responsibility to work together with partner agencies to protect children from harm. This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, academy council members, volunteers and visitors.

All school staff and volunteers are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff will make sure their approach is child centred.

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

2. Key Staff and Contacts

2.1 Academy Based Contacts

Name	**Role**
Jo Bland	Headteacher
Jo Bland	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Joanne Lacey	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Jo Bland	e-Safety Officer
Joanne Lacey	Prevent Duty Lead
Joanne Lacey	Designated Teacher for Children in Care
Joanne Lacey	Designated Teacher for Children Previously in care
Joanne Lacey	Attendance Champion
Jo Bland	Young Carers Champion
All of the above can be contacted via the Academy office on 01205 353062	

2.2 Other Useful Contacts

Agency / Contact	**Contact Details**
Voyage Education Partnership- Central Office, Venture House	01205 337057
Sue Clinton – Trust Safeguarding Lead	01205 335335
Maxine Cunningham – Trust Attendance, Behaviour and Inclusion Lead	01205 316822
Corinna Wright – Trust Primary Improvement Lead	01205 319900
Clare Willerton - Chief Education Officer	01205 337057
Children's Social Care Contact Centre Lincolnshire County Council (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)	01522 782111

Adult Social Care Contact Centre Lincolnshire County Council (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)	01522 782155
Children and Adult Social Care – Emergency Duty Team Lincolnshire County Council (outside office hours)	01522 782333
Designated Officer (LADO) Lincolnshire County Council	01522 554674
Child Line	0800 1111
NSPCC Information Service	0808 800 5000
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285
Rachel Sheppard - Regional Prevent Engagement Officer	Rachel.sheppard@derbsyhire.police.uk prevent@linclonshireshire.police.uk
Sam Slack - DfE Regional Contest Coordinator (East Midlands)	sam.slack@education.gov.uk

3. Key Roles:

3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The role of the DSL is outlined in KCSIE (2026), Annex B. In addition to statutory responsibilities, at Voyage Education Partnership we expect our DSLs to fulfil the following:

- Maintain a list of those pupils deemed to be vulnerable.
- Ensure that families are fully aware of the academy's safeguarding policies and procedures and are kept informed and involved as appropriate.
- Liaise with the Attendance Champion, SENCO and Senior Mental Health Lead to ensure a holistic level of support that focuses on the whole child.
- Track the progress, attainment, and aspirations of children known and previously known to social care.
- During term time and normal school hours, a DSL or DDSL will always be available in our academies. For most of the time, this will mean a trained DSL being on site.

3.2 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DDSL):

Each Academy within the Trust will appoint at least one Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead who will formally provide cover and additional capacity for the DSL. Each Deputy DSL will be trained to the same level as the DSL.

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

4. Staff Training

All staff, including those who do not work directly with children, will read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. A copy of Part One and the academy's relevant safeguarding policies will be provided to all staff as part of their induction.

All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction. This training will be regularly updated. Staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates throughout the year, as required, and at least annually.

5. Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Some children may be at greater risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, or may face additional barriers to recognising or reporting harm. Factors may include prejudice and discrimination, isolation, dependency on adults, communication difficulties and assumptions that indicators of abuse relate to a child's disability or additional needs.

To ensure that all pupils receive appropriate protection and support, we will give particular consideration to children who:

- are disabled, have special educational needs or certain medical conditions
- are young carers
- are affected by parental substance misuse, domestic abuse, parental mental health needs or parental offending
- are asylum seekers or refugees
- are living away from home, in temporary accommodation or experiencing homelessness
- live transient lifestyles or in chaotic and unsupportive home circumstances
- are looked after, previously looked after or have a social worker
- are vulnerable to bullying, prejudice, discrimination or social isolation
- have communication needs or do not have English as their first language
- are dependent on adults for personal or intimate care
- may have difficulty recognising that behaviour towards them is abusive
- have experienced repeated removal from the classroom, multiple suspensions or a part-time timetable, or are at risk of permanent exclusion
- display early signs of abusive, violent or harmful behaviour
- are at risk of child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, trafficking or modern slavery
- are at risk of female genital mutilation, forced marriage, or other honour or faith-based abuse
- are involved in the court system or have a family member in prison
- are at risk of serious violence, gang involvement or county lines
- are at risk of being radicalised into terrorism.

This list provides examples and is not exhaustive. The Academy will consider each child's individual circumstances and ensure that safeguarding information and support are provided in accessible formats and, where appropriate, community languages.

6. Children who are questioning their gender and requests for support with social transition

The Academy will provide a respectful and supportive environment for children who are questioning their gender. Bullying, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated, and any related safeguarding or wellbeing concerns will be addressed promptly.

The Academy will not initiate social transition. Individual members of staff must not independently make changes relating to social transition, including changes to names, pronouns, uniform, facilities, sport or other arrangements.

Where a child or their parent or carer requests support involving social transition, the matter will be referred to the Headteacher and the DSL. The request will be considered through a careful, documented and case-by-case process. Primary-age requests will be approached with particular caution. Staff will not provide clinical advice or undertake functions that require clinical expertise.

The Academy will explain that support with social transition will not include access to toilets, changing rooms, showers or residential accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex, or participation in sport designated for the opposite sex where single-sex participation is necessary for safety.

The child's biological sex will be recorded accurately. Information will only be shared with staff who need it to safeguard and support the child and other pupils. Decisions and their rationale will be recorded and reviewed where circumstances change, including where a child wishes to reverse or amend an earlier arrangement.

7. Child Protection Procedures

7.1 Recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation

To ensure that pupils are protected from harm, staff must understand the behaviours and indicators associated with abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may occur within or outside the home, within an institution or community, and online.

Abuse, neglect and exploitation are rarely isolated issues and may overlap. Children may be harmed by adults or by other children. Children may also cause harm to parents, carers or other family members, sometimes referred to as child-to-parent or caregiver abuse.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 identifies four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. These are set out in Appendix 1, together with relevant indicators of harm.

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here or what if I'm right". Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- always act in the best interest of the child
- follow the Academy Welfare Pathway
- report your concern immediately to the DSL or DDSL, so that they can advise whether immediate action is necessary
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of the concern on the electronic recording system
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

Early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate services. This includes when problems first emerge or where a child is already known to the local authority.

7.2 If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the secure Academy Safeguarding system (MyConcern) to record these early concerns. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should alert the DSL to their concern.

The secure Academy Safeguarding system is the single point for the delivery of concerns. Once staff record a concern on the secure Academy Safeguarding system, it will automatically alert the DSL and DDSL that a concern has been raised.

7.3 If a pupil discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupils', staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not over-react

- give reassuring looks or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences
- under no circumstances ask investigative questions
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- complete the record of concern form on secure Academy Safeguarding system and submit it as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed

7.4 Notifying parents

The Academy will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

7.5 Referral to children's social care

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

Lincolnshire's Social Care Customer Service Centre (referrals) number is 01522 782111 / out of hours 01522 782333 and/or the police (in an emergency on 999 or on 101).

Professionals can consult with a children's Social Worker in the Local Authority if they are unsure whether a Social Work Assessment is necessary and this can be requested through Lincolnshire's Social Care Customer Service Centre number 01522 782111.

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their deputy, the Headteacher and the Trust Safeguarding Lead are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason, they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

7.6 Escalating concerns

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

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

Staff must not close down a concern because they feel "stuck" or "they can't do any more". It is important to escalate concerns to DSLs, headteacher, other senior staff or if necessary, to the Trust Safeguarding Lead, Trust Improvement Lead and Chief Education Officer.

If there are concerns about the work of an external agency staff, it is important to follow the escalation steps outlined in the locally agreed procedures documents.

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

If the options above have been explored fully and the concern still isn't being handled effectively and therefore placing the child at risk, it is important that you continue to escalate your concerns by contacting the Safeguarding Trustee on 01205 331900 or by contacting the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

7.7 Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection information requires a high level of confidentiality. This protects the privacy of the child and others involved and helps to ensure that the inappropriate disclosure of information does not compromise safeguarding action or an investigation.

Staff should ordinarily share safeguarding concerns with the DSL or a Deputy DSL, who will determine what information needs to be shared and with whom. Information will be shared only with those who need it to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.

However, any member of staff may contact children's social care, the police or another appropriate agency directly where they believe this is necessary to protect a child. Staff must not assume that a colleague or another professional has already shared information or taken action.

Child protection information will be stored, processed and shared in accordance with data protection laws, including:

- the Data Protection Act 2018
- the UK General Data Protection Regulation
- the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025

Information sharing will be:

- lawful, necessary and proportionate
- relevant to the current safeguarding risk
- limited to what the recipient genuinely needs to know
- adequate and clearly presented within its proper context
- accurate and up to date
- shared in a timely manner
- transferred and stored securely

Data protection laws do not prevent the sharing of information for the purpose of keeping children safe. Concerns about data protection or confidentiality must not be allowed to prevent appropriate safeguarding action.

Where appropriate and safe, the DSL will explain to the child and/or parents or carers what information will be shared and may seek their consent. Consent is not always required before sharing safeguarding information.

Information may be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so, including where:

- it is not possible or reasonable to obtain consent
- seeking consent may place a child or another person at increased risk
- seeking consent may compromise an investigation
- sharing the information is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child

All information-sharing decisions will be recorded, including:

- what information was shared or withheld
- with whom it was shared
- the reason for the decision
- the lawful basis relied upon, where relevant
- the outcome or action agreed

This includes recording the rationale where a referral to another agency was considered but not made.

Child protection records will be held securely within secure Academy Safeguarding system and separately from the main pupil file. Access will be restricted to those members of staff who require the information to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

Where a pupil transfers to another school or college, safeguarding records will be transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file. Relevant information may also be shared in advance where this is necessary to enable the receiving setting to assess risk and put appropriate safety and support arrangements in place.

8. Universal and community-based Early Help and Family Help

Providing help and support as soon as problems emerge is an important part of safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

Universal services and community-based Team around the Family (TAF) provide support at an early stage, before statutory intervention is required. Support may be delivered through education, health services, family hubs, youth services, housing services and voluntary or community organisations.

The DSL and Deputy DSL(s) will understand the local Family Help arrangements, threshold document and referral pathways and will ensure that staff know how to identify children and families who may benefit from additional support.

Where appropriate, the Academy will work with the child, their parents or carers and relevant agencies to:

- identify the child's needs and any emerging safeguarding concerns
- consider the child's wishes and feelings
- agree the support required and the outcomes to be achieved;
- coordinate services through an identified lead practitioner where appropriate; and
- regularly review whether the support is improving the child's circumstances.

Some children and families may require more targeted support than that available through universal or community-based Early Help. Family Help includes:

- targeted family help coordinated by the local authority and its partners
- statutory support and services for children in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989

Targeted family help is a voluntary arrangement and will ordinarily require the consent and participation of the child and their family.

Where a child or family does not consent to Team around the Family, or does not engage with the support offered, the DSL will consider whether the child's needs are likely to increase or whether there is a safeguarding risk that requires referral to local authority children's social care.

Team around the family cases will be kept under regular review. Where the child's circumstances do not improve, the support is not meeting their needs or concerns increase, the DSL will consider whether the matter should be escalated or referred for statutory assessment.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a referral will be made immediately to local authority children's social care under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and, where appropriate, to the police.

The Academy will also understand and follow the local criteria and procedures relating to:

- section 20 of the Children Act 1989, concerning the local authority's duty to accommodate a child
- section 31 of the Children Act 1989, concerning care and supervision orders
- children with disabilities
- children managed within the youth secure estate
- children affected by abuse, neglect, exploitation, trafficking or modern slavery

The Academy will support children's social care and other agencies with assessments and multi-agency plans. All concerns, discussions, decisions and the reasons for those decisions will be clearly recorded.

9. Teaching Pupils About Safeguarding

At Boston Pioneers Academy pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

- Keeping and staying safe
- Growing and changing
- Relationships
- Being responsible
- Feelings and emotions
- Keeping Healthy
- Computer and online safety including misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories
- Money Matters

The themes are repeated annually and are progressive in content delivered at an age-appropriate level. In addition, each year group have termly additional lessons regarding online safety. We recognise that computers and tablets are not the only source of on-line device for our learners. Our learners have increased access to smart interactive watches and smart phones.

Specific themed weeks and school days also focus upon keeping and staying safe. Examples such anti-bullying week, on-line safety week, water safety, cyber bullying are features of the long-term curriculum. However, the detail in content is driven by the current needs of classes/year groups. For example, railway safety may feature as a priority for particular years or cohorts. It is important that the additional curriculum content is driven by current need and is proactive rather than reactive.

At present, (26/27), e-safety and the impact of domestic abuse have a priority as these are reflective of our contextual safeguarding concerns.

The Academy enjoys good working relationships with local and national agencies and charities that keep children safe such as NSPCC, NHS, CEOP, EDAN Lincs and many more. This ensures that Academy uses the most up to date guidance to plan, teach, review and update our curriculum offer.

10. Filtering and Monitoring

Filtering and monitoring systems are essential to safeguarding children at Boston Pioneers Academy. We will take all reasonable steps to minimise pupils' exposure to harmful and inappropriate content through the Academy's IT systems and internet-connected devices.

Clear roles and responsibilities are assigned for the management and oversight of filtering and monitoring. The responsible member of the Senior Leadership Team is supported by the DSL and the Academy's IT staff or provider.

The effectiveness of the Academy's filtering and monitoring arrangements will be reviewed at least once every academic year. Checks will cover all relevant internet-connected devices and locations, and a record of the review, findings and any actions taken will be retained.

Online safety is a safeguarding issue.

11. Safer Recruitment

At Boston Pioneers Academy we comply with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the arrangements of the local safeguarding partners. We operate safer recruitment procedures to help deter, reject or identify people who may pose a risk of harm to children.

Voyage Education Partnership will carry out all required pre-appointment checks and will verify, as appropriate, an applicant's identity, right to work in the UK, qualifications, employment history, references, mental and physical fitness, criminal record information and suitability to work with children.

- At least one member of each recruitment panel will have completed safer recruitment training.
- The academies obtain written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the academy have been appropriately checked.
- Voyage Education Partnership and Boston Pioneers Academy maintain a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.
- Boston Pioneers Academy will not knowingly allow a barred person to engage in regulated activity with children.
- Trainee teachers will be checked either by the Academy or where a trainee teacher is fee-funded, the training provider will be responsible for undertaking the required checks. The Academy will obtain written confirmation that the checks have been completed and that the trainee has been judged suitable to work with children.

11.1 Volunteers

All volunteer roles will be assessed before the individual begins work. The Academy will determine whether the role amounts to regulated activity and what checks are required. A volunteer will not undertake regulated activity until their children's barred-list status has been confirmed.

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

Where the statutory criteria are met, the Academy will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service in relation to a volunteer.

11.2 Third Party Staff (Contractors)

The Academy will ensure that contractors and other third-party staff working on the premises have undergone the appropriate checks for the work they will undertake.

Where a contractor will engage in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check with children's barred-list information will be required.

Where a contractor will not engage in regulated activity but will have the opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check without barred-list information may be required.

Where a contractor has not undergone the appropriate checks, they will not be permitted to work unsupervised or undertake regulated activity while children are present.

The Academy will:

- obtain written confirmation from the contractor's employer that the appropriate checks have been completed
- check the identity of contractors and third-party staff when they arrive at the Academy
- ensure that the individual presenting for work is the same person on whom the checks were completed.

Where a self-employed contractor is engaged, the Academy will obtain the appropriate check directly or verify that the individual holds a suitable and eligible check at the required level.

Where the Academy directs a pupil to attend alternative provision, it will obtain written assurance that adults working with pupils have undergone the appropriate safer recruitment checks. This assurance does not remove the Academy's responsibility to undertake its own safeguarding due diligence and keep the placement under review.

11.3 Site security and visitors

Visitors to the Academy, including contractors, will be required to sign in and will be issued with an identification badge confirming that they have permission to be on the premises. Parents and carers who are only delivering or collecting their children will not normally be required to sign in.

All visitors are expected to comply with the Academy's safeguarding, conduct and health and safety requirements.

For visitors attending in a professional capacity, the Academy will check their identity and obtain assurance that the appropriate checks have been completed by their employer, where relevant. The Academy will not ask to see the DBS certificate itself where satisfactory written assurance has been provided.

11.4 The Single Central Record

Our Single Central Record covers the following people: all academy and Trust staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency staff, third-party supply staff who work at the school, volunteers, trustees and academy council members. Our Single Central Record is recorded in such a way that allows for details of each individual academy to be provided separately, and without delay, to those entitled to inspect that information.

12. Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the Academy, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our Academy we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Where a pupil attends off-site or alternative provision, the Academy will remain responsible for safeguarding and will undertake its own due diligence, including where the provider appears on a local authority approved list.

13. Sport, toilets, changing facilities and showers

The Academy will manage participation in sport and the use of toilets, changing rooms and showers in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, the Equality Act 2010, the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Where the nature of a sport means that physical strength, stamina or physique creates a safety or competitive disadvantage, pupils may be grouped according to biological sex. Where single-sex provision is necessary for safety, no exceptions will be made. In other circumstances, requests concerning participation will be considered individually, taking account of safety, fairness, the welfare and best interests of the child and other children, and the Academy's equality and human rights duties.

The Academy will provide separate toilet facilities for boys and girls where required by law. Pupils will not use toilets designated for the opposite biological sex. Where a pupil does not wish to use the facilities designated for their biological sex, the Academy will consider whether a suitable self-contained individual facility can be provided without compromising the safety, privacy, comfort or dignity of that pupil or any other child.

Pupils aged 11 or over at the start of the school year will not be required or permitted to undress in front of pupils of the opposite biological sex and will not use changing or shower facilities designated for the opposite sex.

Any individual arrangements will be clearly recorded, communicated to relevant staff on a need-to-know basis and reviewed regularly.

14. Residential visits and sleeping arrangements

All residential visits will be subject to a documented safeguarding and educational-visits risk assessment.

Children will not share overnight accommodation with children of the opposite biological sex. This applies to shared bedrooms, dormitories, tents and other communal sleeping arrangements.

Where a child does not wish to share accommodation with children of the same biological sex, the Academy will consider whether suitable separate accommodation can reasonably be provided. Any alternative arrangement must preserve the safety, privacy, comfort and dignity of the child and all other children.

Sleeping arrangements will be agreed and documented before departure and will not be changed informally by individual staff during the visit. Any safeguarding concern arising during a residential activity will be reported to the visit leader and DSL without delay.

15. Specific Safeguarding and Child Protection Issues

15.1 Mental Health

Mental Health problems can in some cases be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem; however, academy staff are well placed to identify where a child's behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of potential mental health concerns and will share these with the DSL.

We can access a range of advice and support to help us identify what mental health support needs a child may need, which may include working with external agencies.

15.2 Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. It can be committed by parents or other family members, by people known but not related to the victim and by strangers.

Staff should be vigilant regarding community safety incidents within the vicinity of the academy and ensure that all information is passed to the DSL in a timely manner.

Children are also provided with information in order to ensure they are able to keep themselves safe.

15.3 Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. The families of children may also be subject to child arrangements processes through the family court system.

We recognise that both circumstances may be stressful for children and appropriate support will be provided in line with local and national guidance.

15.4 Children missing in education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. Children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, persistently absent or missing from education could potentially indicate abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation as well as criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. The Academy will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the Local Authority, particularly where children go missing for extended periods of time, on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the Academy day.

15.5 Children with family members in prison

Children who have family members that are sent to prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The Academy recognises that these children may need support. Support will be provided in line with guidance from the National Information Centre on Children of Offenders and local agencies.

15.6 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity:

a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or;

b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or;

c) through violence or threat of violence.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved with exploitation
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

This list is not exhaustive, staff should remain vigilant and any concerns should be raised immediately with the DSL.

15.7 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity:

a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or;

b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CSE can affect any young person, male or female, under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to sexual activity.

Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

Indicators of CSE (in addition to those indicators for CCE) can include:

- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

The Academy includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and RSE curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

15.8 County Lines

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines".

It involves Child Criminal Exploitation where gangs use children and vulnerable people to move and store drugs and money across the country.

County Lines activity and the associated coercion, intimidation, violence, weapons and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities. Children can be targeted and recruited in any setting and are easily trapped as the gangs create 'debts' and can threaten serious violence and kidnap of family members if they attempt to leave the network.

Academy staff will remain vigilant to those children and concerns will be shared with the DSL.

15.9 Child-on-child sexual harassment, sexual violence and abuse

At Boston Pioneers Academy we believe that every child has the right to attend and learn in a safe environment. Child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence are never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Although girls are more likely to experience sexual harassment and sexual violence, any child can be a victim, and abuse may occur between children of any age or sex. All children who report abuse will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward.

We recognise that child-on-child abuse may be occurring even where no reports have been made. Children may not feel ready or able to describe their experiences, may not recognise the behaviour as harmful, or may communicate their concerns indirectly through their behaviour, presentation or relationships. Reports may also be made by friends, parents or other adults, or arise from something witnessed or overheard by a member of staff.

Staff must act immediately where they have concerns about a child's welfare and must not wait for a direct disclosure.

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

- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- abuse within intimate personal relationships between children
- physical abuse, including serious physical assault and threats involving weapons
- sexual harassment and sexual violence
- harmful sexual behaviour
- misogynistic or misandrist abuse and harassment
- causing another child to engage in sexual activity without consent
- making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes, including digitally altered or AI-generated images, deepfakes and "deep nudes"
- upskirting
- initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals

Sexual behaviour exists on a continuum, ranging from developmentally expected behaviour through problematic behaviour to abusive and violent behaviour. The Academy will consider the child's age, developmental stage, understanding, vulnerability, the nature and frequency of the behaviour, any difference in age or power and the wider context.

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the Academy's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

Staff must never dismiss abusive or harmful behaviour as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Doing so can create an unsafe culture, normalise abuse and discourage children from reporting concerns.

Child-on-child abuse is preventable. The Academy will seek to identify concerns early and provide timely, appropriate and evidence-based support to reduce the risk of behaviour escalating.

The Academy will maintain a **whole-Academy approach** to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse by:

- providing an age-appropriate preventative curriculum covering healthy relationships, consent, respectful behaviour, online safety and how to seek help
- ensuring that staff receive appropriate training to recognise, report and respond to concerns
- providing children with clear, accessible and trusted routes for reporting concerns
- challenging inappropriate, abusive, misogynistic and misandrist behaviour
- completing prompt and proportionate risk assessments and safety and support plans
- monitoring patterns, trends, locations and times where concerns are more likely to arise
- sharing relevant safeguarding information and emerging local trends with safeguarding partners, where appropriate
- using incidents and pupil voice to review the curriculum, behaviour systems, staff training and the Academy's physical and online environments

15.10 Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. Boston Pioneers Academy fully supports Operation Encompass which is a police and education partnership to support children and young people who are experiencing domestic abuse. Operation Encompass aims to ensure that appropriate school staff are made aware early enough to support the child/young person in the best way possible. Once police have received a report of domestic abuse where children were present or usually reside there, brief information is shared with the DSL in school. Our DSL's and deputy DSLs have been trained to ensure this is managed well.

15.11 So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation).

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female

Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so Academy staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by a female learner about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

Teachers have a legal duty to personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. This should be done with the support of the DSL so that wider concerns for the child or young person are also considered. This will also enable the Academy to support the staff member through this process.

A forced marriage is a marriage entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. In England and Wales the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages. Staff must speak to the DSL if they have concerns of forced marriage.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

In a forced marriage, children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. Academy staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a learner about being taken abroad and not being allowed to return to England.

15.12 Preventing Radicalisation

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

The Academy has an identified Prevent Lead who will co-ordinate all concerns and necessary referrals related to extremism, radicalisation and terrorism. Please refer to the *Trust Prevent policy* for further information.

Appendix 1

Glossary

For this document the following terminology should be considered:

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

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

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

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

Safeguarding extends beyond child protection and includes:

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

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part-time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DSL refers to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the School.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example, step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Extra familial Harm - Extra-familial harm refers to abuse or exploitation occurring outside the family environment.

Contextual safeguarding refers to the approach used to understand and respond to the wider relationships, environments and circumstances in which such harm occurs.

Family Help refers to support provided to children and families as soon as problems emerge. It includes targeted early help and, where appropriate, statutory support provided to children in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Appendix 2

Safeguarding Concern Reporting Pathway



Appendix 3

Relevant policies and statutory framework

This policy is underpinned by the following documents and legislation

Voyage Education Partnership Polices:-

- Attendance Policy
- Children missing in education policy
- Disciplinary policy and procedure
- Policy and procedure for allegations and concerns raised in relation to staff, supply staff, contractors and volunteers
- Prevent Policy
- Relationships and sex education policy
- Use of reasonable force and physical interventions policy
- Health and safety on education trips and visits policy
- IT acceptable use Policy for pupils and staff
- Online safety policy
- Social media policy
- Recruitment and selection policy and procedure
- Staff code of conduct
- Whistleblowing policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

External Policy, guidance and legislation

- Local safeguarding procedures published by Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)
- The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Education Act 2002
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Crime and Policing Act 2026
- DfE keeping children safe in education (2026)
- DfE working together to safeguard children (2026)
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years
- Early years foundation stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2025)
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (2024)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused; advice for practitioners (2015)
- Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales (2023)
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (2026)

- Searching, screening and confiscation in schools (2023)
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges
- Behaviour in Schools Advice for headteachers and school staff
- Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information