

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2024-2025

Wilkes Academy of Performing Arts



Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
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Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Head Teacher	Nikki Wilkes & Suzanne Mole	<i>N. Wilkes</i> <i>S. Mole</i>	September 2025
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Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details
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POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies

- Behaviour
- Recruitment and Selection
- Whistleblowing
- Code of Conduct for Staff/ Staff Behaviour Policy
- Online/Social Media Safety
- Health and Safety

Definitions

Working Together to Safeguard Children safeguarding 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.

Child Protection is defined in the Children Act 1989 (s.47) as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Under statutory guidance and legislation action must be taken to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

Introduction

At Wilkes Academy safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone at Wilkes Academy of Performing Arts** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children.

Wilkes Academy recognises that we are an important part in the wider safeguarding system. **All staff** will understand and recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff will make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they will consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

Wilkes Academy has an expectation that all staff have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by ensuring:

- They identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating
- The provision of a safe environment in which children and young people can learn;
- Identifying children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years (See appendix F)
- They will support social workers and other agencies following any referral
- We fulfil our statutory responsibilities to identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- Children are protected from maltreatment, to prevent the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Action is taken to enable all children to have the best outcomes

All action taken by Wilkes Academy will be in accordance with:

- **Current legislation and Statutory guidance:**

[Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#) which sets out the multiagency working arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and protect them from harm; in addition, it sets out the statutory roles and responsibilities of schools.

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#) is statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education which all schools and colleges must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

[The Teacher Standards](#) state that teachers, including head teachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best interests** of the child

- All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it. **(More information is located in Annexe F)**
- If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them **immediately**.
- All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care for statutory assessments.
- All staff should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) and local authority children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.
- All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. It is important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication with children and young people.
- All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.
- All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

Equalities Statement

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children and families' diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). With regards to safeguarding we will consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and our Public Sector Equality Duty.

All staff will recognise that a child being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights.

Overall Aims

This policy will contribute to the safeguarding of students at Wilkes Academy by:

- Raising the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguarding children
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient and robust safeguarding ethos in the school, built on mutual respect, and shared values
- Teaching children about safeguarding, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of broad and balanced curriculum
- Alerting staff to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues including abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Ensuring early help and support is provided to children who are showing signs of being drawn into anti-social behaviour or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Developing staff awareness of the causes and consequences of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Reducing the potential risks students face of being exposed to violence, extremism, exploitation or victimisation;
- Working in partnership with students, parents and other agencies.

This policy will contribute to supporting the students at Wilkes Academy by:

- Identifying and protecting the most vulnerable
- Taking a contextual safeguarding approach to understanding the risks presenting to children outside the family home, taking into consideration extra familial harm
- Taking seriously the risks presented to children by children, with particular vigilance for child on child abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence

- Assessing individual needs where possible
- Designing plans to meet those needs.

Expectations

All staff will:

- Read and understand Part 1 of statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#). Those working directly with children will also read Annex B.
- Be familiar with this safeguarding policy, in addition to this all staff will be aware of the systems and policies in place which support safeguarding including
 - Behaviour Policy;
 - Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct);
 - The safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods
 - The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Be subject to **Safer Recruitment** processes and checks, whether they are new staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers etc.
- Be involved, where appropriate, in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and child protection plans
- Know who and how to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputies, responsible for safeguarding.
- Record concerns on the appropriate safeguarding systems in a suitable and timely manner in line with Wilkes Academy protocols.
- Act with professional curiosity and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have concerns about a child.
- Have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- Be aware that children can abuse other children at any age (child-on-child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports
- Are aware of the need to raise to the senior leadership team any concerns they have about safeguarding practices within the school.

- Adhere to the school's Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called Code of Conduct) and behaviour management policies;
- Be aware of signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, the additional barriers with regards to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those with relevant health conditions and young carers;
- **Are** aware of their legal responsibility to report cases of FGM to the police. Whilst all staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) there is a specific **legal** duty on **teachers** personally to report this to the police. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. (KCSIE 2024)
- Aware of school whistleblowing procedures and policy;
Where staff feel unable to raise an issue with the employer or feel that their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed the **NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available. Staff can call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk.**
- Share information or concerns about children with the Designated Safeguarding Lead where it includes those:
 - who need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect
 - requiring mental health support,
 - may benefit from early help
 - where there is a radicalisation concern
 - where a crime may have been committed
 - where there is the potential for child on child abuse/child on child sexual harassment or sexual violence
 - where there is potential for harm outside the home

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to

Contact Swindon

Telephone 01793 464646 or E-mail: contactswindon@swindon.gov.uk

and/or the police immediately by dialling 999.

See [When to Call the Police](#)

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Duties are further outlined in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (Annex C)**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a senior member of staff, who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place) within the school. The DSL carries a significant level of responsibility and they are given time, funding, resources and support to carry out the role effectively.

Details of our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) are:

Dean Parsons – Director of Student Experience – Dean@wilkesacademy.co.uk

Kay Wilkes – Welfare officer & DDSL – Kay@wilkesacademy.co.uk

and can be found on **Wilkes Academy of Performing Arts** website, our correspondence or the notice board in Reception.

Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for safeguarding child protection remains with the DSL.

The DSL and DDSL at Wilkes Academy have the appropriate training, knowledge and skills to carry out this substantive role; this includes training on the Prevent Duty. The safeguarding team at Wilkes Academy understand the importance of providing information and support to children's social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. They also understand the impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing.

The broad areas of responsibility for the DSL are:

- **To refer cases**
 - of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation to the local authority children's social care as require
 - to **Wiltshire Prevent Policing team** by email: Preventreferrals@wiltshire.police.uk where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
 - where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
 - where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.
- NPCC - When to call the police** should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

- **To hear** the voice and views of children, by developing a culture of listening to children, taking account of their wishes and feelings
- **Ensuring staff** understand the difficulties some children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and fostering a culture within Wilkes Academy to overcome any barriers
- **Provide** advice and support to staff regarding child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- **Liaise** with staff, especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads, special educational needs coordinators on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare, including online and digital safety.
- **Liaise** with the Headteacher/Principal to inform him or her of issues - especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- **Work with others** to fulfil statutory responsibilities in relation to children and young people subject to a child protection plan by attending child protection conferences and implementing the multiagency child protection plan; and when required, liaise with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to child protection cases, which concern a staff member.
- **Promote** supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- **Work** with relevant staff, including senior leaders, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children may be experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at Wilkes Academy
- **Ensuring** the staff at Wilkes Academy know the cohort of children who have or had a social worker, and they understand the academic progress and attainment whilst maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these children. Supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these children to reach their potential.
- **Ensure** staff at Wilkes Academy understand that although statutory intervention may have ended for a child that there may be a lasting impact on the child's educational outcomes

- **The DSL** will act as a single point of contact for all matters of safeguarding and advice for staff, volunteers and governors.
- **Undertake Training** to ensure the DSL (and any deputies) has the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role (updated every 2 years). Further knowledge and skills should be updated at regular intervals and shared with relevant staff as appropriate;
- **Ensure** every member of staff at Wilkes Academy has access to the safeguarding and child protection policies and associated practices are known, understood and used appropriately. This includes part time and new staff.
- **Provide** safeguarding training and understanding of policy and practice for new staff at their induction
- **Link** with the safeguarding partner arrangements to ensure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements
- **Provide** an annual report to the governing body on safeguarding and child protection activity within the school
- **Manage safeguarding** information confidentially and safely through:
 - **Ensuring** that child protection records are kept up to date, and records are clear and comprehensive, that the record contains details of how concerns were followed up and resolved and that records note all actions taken and decisions made including outcomes.
 - safeguarding records are shared **within 5 days** of a child leaving Wilkes Academy or within **5 days** of starting a new term with a signed receipt being obtained
- **The DSL** will understand that a lack of information about a child's circumstances can impact on a child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes, by providing information in a timely manner this will ensure the receiving school/college/educational setting can put in place the right support to safeguard this child and help the child to thrive. The DSL will share information in advance to the DSL at the new education setting prior to the child leaving to enable support to be available to safeguard the child.
- **Availability** of the DSL (or any deputies) during term time and school hours will be ensured for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- **Ensure** appropriate safeguarding cover and availability during term time/ any out of hours/out of term activities managed by the school to include support or attending child protection conferences and strategy discussions.
- **Help** promote educational outcomes by sharing information about vulnerable learners with relevant staff. This includes ensuring that staff:

- know who these children are,
- understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort;
- are supported to identify the challenges that children in this group might face
- make reasonable adjustments so that they act to best support these children.

KCSIE 2024 - Annex C provides more detail regarding the role of the DSL

Management Team

The Headteacher/Principal at Wilkes Academy ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by their governing bodies and proprietors (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation), are understood, and followed by all staff.

They will ensure that there is a whole organisational approach to safeguarding by ensuring safeguarding is at the forefront and underpins all relevant processes and policies. These systems, policies and processes will be readily available and easy to understand.

The Management Committee at Wilkes Academy will ensure that there is a senior member lead to take responsibility of Wilkes Academy's safeguarding arrangements. This senior member must ensure that the member of staff from the school senior leadership team is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and ensure that the DSL has the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out this substantial role effectively.

The Management team at Wilkes Academy will ensure:

- That safeguarding and child protection practice, process and policy (including online safety) is effective and is compliant with legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.
- That the appointed Governor with Safeguarding responsibilities will liaise with the DSL to produce an annual report for governors and complete the S.175/157 (annual safeguarding) audit for the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership
- That the school has a safeguarding policy
- That the school has key policies in place to cover:
 - Behaviour
 - Staff behaviour/Code of Conduct

- Appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place to respond to children who are absent from education
- That Wilkes Academy has policies and systems in place to prevent, identify and respond to Child on Child Abuse and Child on Child Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence
- The governing body reviews Wilkes Academy safeguarding policies/procedures annually or as required due to changes in statutory guidance
- That where possible more than one emergency contact telephone number is recorded for each pupil and this is checked on a regular basis
- That there is an appropriately trained Designated Teacher appointed to promote the educational achievement for: Children Looked After (CLA); those children who have left care through adoption; special guardianships or child care orders; or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales; and will work with the Virtual School Head
- That the staff at Wilkes Academy have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep Children Looked After (CLA) safe
- That Wilkes Academy operates “safer recruitment” procedures and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and relevant volunteers. In line with School Staffing Regulations, at least one person on any recruitment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training.
- That the school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff/volunteers
- That the Management team will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer, Police and other partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal
- That Wilkes Academy will maintain a Single Central Record of relevant pre-employment checks as detailed in [KCSIE 2024](#) and that details of individuals should be removed from the single central record when they leave the employment of Wilkes Academy
- That all staff who work with children undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction and this training is regularly updated.
- Staff will be aware that children can abuse children online and this can take the form of abusive, harassing and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images and the sharing of abusive images
- That all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online, at induction

- That Wilkes Academy will contribute to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance (see [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#))
- That Wilkes Academy consider their duties as required in the [Prevent Duty](#) and has in place a Prevent risk assessment
- The governing body will be aware of their obligations under Human Rights Act 1998 and the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Swindon multi agency safeguarding arrangements
- That children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online safety
- That Wilkes Academy has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to support work online, but these will not act as an unreasonable restriction – these filters and monitors will be informed by the [Filtering and Monitoring Standards for Schools and Colleges](#)
- That the school remedies any safeguarding deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay
- That where **governing bodies or proprietors** hire or rent out the school or college facilities/premises to organisations or individuals, appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe as detailed in [KCSIE 2024](#) the “*Use of school or college premises for non-school/college activities*”. The guidance on [Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings](#) details the safeguarding arrangements that these providers need to have in place.

Training

In addition to this policy, **all** staff working directly with children will read and understand Part One and Annex B of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) 2024](#)

All staff members will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training on induction, this will be refreshed at least annually, considering current key learning points and trends from serious case reviews and local current and emerging issues and trends.

In addition, **all** staff will receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. This includes:

- Whistle blowing procedures covered in our whole school training so that staff know what to do if they have concerns relating to safeguarding practice within the school

- The DSL and any deputies will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training will be updated every two years. Deputies will be trained to the same level as the DSL.
- Proprietors will ensure that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. The training will be regularly updated. Induction and training will be in line with advice from the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership
- Wilkes Academy will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training
- The Designated Teacher appointed to promote the educational achievement of children in care will undergo appropriate training
- The DSL will undertake relevant Prevent awareness, Prevent referral and Channel training and in turn will provide training, advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation. All other school staff members will complete appropriate training, this will include FGM and Prevent training using quality assured provision such as the [Government Online Prevent E-training learning package](#).
- Online and internet safety training for staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach
- Training to understand responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
- All members of the governing board will be trained in safeguarding (including Prevent)

Safer Recruitment and Safer Working Practices

Wilkes Academy has a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children in our school. At Wilkes Academy we have robust recruitment procedures that deter or prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment with us, this includes volunteers who may work in our school.

Wilkes Academy will ensure that they have full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' (2024) including:

- All our advertisements for positions in our school contain safeguarding statements,
- Advert, job description, person specifications and application forms, include safeguarding information relating to regulated activity,
- The safeguarding policy and associated processes will be provided within the applicant pack.

- All applications including shortlisting will follow safer recruitment procedures and guidance within KCSIE 2024, which includes pre-appointment vetting checks.
- As part of the shortlisting process, Wilkes Academy will consider carrying out an online search as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. [Name of school] will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be undertaken as part of due diligence checks.
- References will always be obtained, scrutinised and concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

All recruitment materials will include reference to Wilkes Academy commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils.

Further information regarding safer working practices is available on the following link:

[Safer Recruitment Consortium training information](#)

Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold

All staff should report any concerns relating to staff to the Headteacher where it is alleged that anyone working in the setting that provides education for persons under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

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

Where there are concerns/allegations about the Headteacher or Principal, this should be referred to the Management team

All allegations will be managed in line with the statutory guidance in KCSIE 2024 and the school whistleblowing procedure.

Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold

Wilkes Academy has policies and processes to deal with any concerns or allegations which do not meet the harm threshold, referred to as 'low-level' concerns

Where an allegation is of a 'low level concern' then Wilkes Academy will ensure KCSIE 2024 processes are followed.

Advice will be sought from Swindon LADO in any instances where it is unsure if the harms threshold has been met.

Where staff feel unable to raise an issue with the Headteacher or Management team or feel their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed the [NSPCC whistleblowing advice line](#) is available.

Staff can call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk. Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.

Extra familial harm – Harm outside the home

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families, extra familial harm/risk outside the home. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers possibly have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can possibly undermine parent-child relationships.

It is important that colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm

More information can be found <https://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

Key Safeguarding Areas

Wilkes Academy has a responsibility to address all safeguarding issues (see KCSIE 2024 Annex B for full details).

These include:

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Children and the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Cybercrime
- Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness

- Mental health
- Modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Preventing radicalisation
- The Prevent Duty
- Channel
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Serious violence
- So called 'honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage)
- FGM and mandatory reporting duty for teachers
- Forced Marriage
- Additional advice and Support

Procedures

Reporting Concerns

The procedure to respond to a concern about a child is detailed in Appendix B.

Involving Parents and Carers

In general, the DSL will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers before making a referral to another agency including Contact Swindon. There may be occasions when the DSL will contact another agency **before** informing parents/carers because they consider that by contacting them it may increase the risk of harm to the child.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Multi Agency Working

Staff at Wilkes Academy understand the importance of our role to work in partnership with other agencies and that we have a shared and equal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. If there are safeguarding or child protection concerns, all staff should be aware of how to make a referral in the unusual circumstances that the DSL or deputies are not available.

There should be no delay in reporting concerns to the appropriate agencies such as Contact Swindon. Referrals are made to **Contact Swindon by phone (01793 464646) or email to contactswindon@swindon.gov.uk**. For out of hours contact **The Emergency Duty Service by phone (01793 436699)**. Phone calls should be followed up with a referral using a **[Request for Help and Support form](#)**. Where the child already has a social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved or, in their absence, to their team manager.

If there is immediate risk then a call **must** be made to Police.

All situations where rape of a child has been disclosed contact with Police **must** be made.

At Wilkes Academy all staff will understand the age and meaning of consent.

Further information can be found in [KCSIE 2024 Part 5: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment](#)

Wilkes Academy will co-operate with any child protection enquiries including statutory safeguarding assessments conducted by children's social care: Wilkes Academy will ensure representation at single and multi-agency meetings such as integrated support plan meetings, initial and review child protection conferences and core group meetings.

Where a pupil/student is subject to a multi-agency child protection plan or a multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) meeting, Wilkes Academy will contribute to any information requests.

Escalation/professional disagreement

Wilkes Academy will use the **Swindon Safeguarding Partnership Policy on resolution of professional disagreements** relating to safeguarding and protection of children in all cases where escalation is required, to achieve the right outcome for children.

[Multi-Agency Process for the Resolution of Professional Disagreements Relating to Safeguarding Protection of Children \(Escalation Process\) - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

Exclusions

When Wilkes Academy is considering excluding, (either by suspension or permanent exclusion), a vulnerable pupil and / or a student who is the subject of a Child Protection plan, is a Child Looked After or where there are safeguarding concerns Wilkes Academy will follow the local authority procedures. A contextual safeguarding risk assessment and safety plan will be considered prior to any exclusion. The document can be accessed on the

Safeguarding page of the Swindon Hub for Education using the following link: [Education Safeguarding Resources | Swindon Hub for Education](#)

Private Fostering Arrangements

Where Wilkes Academy staff become aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they should raise this, in the first instance, with the DSL. The DSL will notify the local authority of the circumstances to enable the local authority to discharge their duties.

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 for children with a disability) is provided with care and accommodation by someone who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home, for 28 days or more.

More information can be found on the following link: [Private fostering | Swindon Borough Council](#)

FGM Reporting Guidance

Mandatory reporting duty for teachers

All staff, particularly teachers at Wilkes Academy understand the duty to report to Police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils/ students.

Staff at Wilkes Academy understand that if there is a suspicion that a girl may be travelling for the purposes of FGM, the teacher or DSL will report this directly to Police as the child may be in immediate risk of harm.

Phone 101 if a known case (999 if the child is in immediate risk of harm). It is also good practice to inform Contact Swindon of these actions).

Children who are absent from Education

(To be read in conjunction with the settings Attendance Policy and the DFE guidance: [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#))

Staff at Wilkes Academy understand that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.

Staff at Wilkes Academy response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community

Child on Child abuse and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and that sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue and that this can happen both inside and outside of school including happening online. All staff at Wilkes Academy working with children maintain an attitude of '***it could happen here***', and this is especially important when considering child-on-child abuse.

All staff at Wilkes Academy have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, they will be vigilant to what they hear, are told and see and will report all concerns, disclosures or incidents to the DSL.

Staff at Wilkes Academy will challenge any inappropriate behaviour between peers, they will not downplay or dismiss behaviours as 'just banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. All Staff at Wilkes Academy will develop and model the ethos and culture of our school's zero tolerance of this type of behaviour and will support and encourage children to come forward and report any issues or concerns they have.

All staff will be trained to recognise signs and symptoms which may signal a child is at risk from sexual harassment or sexual violence and all other types of child on child abuse.

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- Staff will inform the DSL and record the allegation, but will not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence

The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the child(ren) who experience the abuse and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named trusted adult they can talk to if needed

All who experience abuse will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Those who experience abuse will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Those who experience abuse will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

In addition to existing advice about managing a disclosure contained in this policy, staff will follow the following guidance; [Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice 2022](#) before screening or conducting a search of a pupil for a prohibited item.

The DSL will manage any incidents in line with the guidance contained in Part 5 of KCSIE 2024.

Staff at Wilkes Academy will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different vulnerable groups
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially by **scanning QR codes, self-referring directly or approaching any member of academy staff** to ensure their concerns are heard and their wishes are understood
- Ensure staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

Serious Violence

All staff will be aware of the risk factors which may signal a child is at risk from or are involved in serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm, a change in wellbeing, signs of unexplained injuries or assault. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate a child is being exploited.

All staff are aware of the risk factors which increase the likelihood of a child becoming involved in serious violence such as being male, having been frequently absent from school or permanently excluded from school, having experienced maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

All staff will be aware that violence can peak in the hours just before or after school.

All staff will report any concerns to the DSL.

The Prevent Duty

As with other safeguarding issues, staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff will use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the DSL making a referral using the agreed local Prevent referral procedures.

All referrals will be made to Preventreferrals@wiltshire.police.uk by our DSL where it will be reviewed, there may be a need for a multi-agency Channel panel where information from partners is reviewed and the referral considered, level of vulnerability agreed and consider what support may be needed. Wilkes Academy's DSL will provide information and attend Channel Panels where they are requested to do so.

Wilkes Academy's DSL will also consider whether it is appropriate to share information with any new education setting in advance of the child leaving our school. This is to ensure the new setting are able to continue supporting the child through the Channel programme.

Sharing of Information

Wilkes Academy recognises the need to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children.

Whilst the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If staff are unsure, they will contact the DSL to discuss. Wilkes Academy will use the government's guidance '[Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing services to children, young people, parents and carers](#)' (May 2024) to help manage information sharing in their setting.

Transfer of safeguarding records when a pupil moves to a new setting

Where children leave Wilkes Academy the DSL will ensure their child protection/safeguarding file is transferred to the new education setting **within 5 days**.

This will allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker or have been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives, also ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. This file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

The DSL will ensure this file is transferred within 5 days for an in-year transfer and within 5 days of the start of a new term.

Wilkes Academy's DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new education setting in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college

The school will retain records for pupils where there is an existing safeguarding /child protection file or who have been withdrawn to be electively educated at home. These will be stored confidentially until the child's 25th birthday and then disposed of in a confidential and secure manner.

Appendix A

Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in Keeping Children Safe in Education Annex B.

Forms of abuse and neglect

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

All Wilkes Academy staff will be made aware that abuse, neglect and child exploitation are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another. For children with Special Educational Needs

and Disabilities (SEND) and those with relevant health conditions additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse, neglect and child exploitation, these include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs;
- possible communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse, which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Females can also be abusers, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate

care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

All staff should be aware that child sexual and child criminal exploitation are forms of child abuse.

Domestic Abuse: The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child on child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16).

Appendix B: If you have concerns about a child:

If the child is at immediate risk call the Police on 999
(Police must be informed of all sexual assault cases)

To make an urgent referral to Contact Swindon
01793 464646 Out of hours 01793 436699

To make a Prevent referral use the Prevent referral form and send to PreventReferrals@wiltshire.police.uk For questions contact 01278 647466

It may be necessary to also refer to Contact Swindon – take advice from MASH or the Prevent numbers above

Sharing / recording concerns An individual with concerns about a child takes immediate action by following the school policy and informs a designated member of the safeguarding team. The DSL will consider the information, in the context of any other concerns / disclosures, and decide on next steps. Parents / carers should be involved at this stage, **unless to do so may place the child at increased risk of significant harm, in which case advice should be sought from Contact Swindon.**

No referral to children's social care

Actions will be agreed to monitor the child and support the child / family where needed. Early Help should be considered.

If concerns continue / escalate, the decision will be reviewed to decide if a referral is necessary

DSL / DDSL make referral to Contact Swindon (and call the police if necessary)

Contact Swindon

Contact Swindon is the new Integrated Front Door. Here multi-agency teams of professionals will triage concerns and provide advice and guidance or direct the referral for the most appropriate services of targeted support and intervention

Contact Swindon Considerations: When Contact Swindon receive a referral they will ensure there is a graduated response to the needs of the child and family, referrals are made for Help and Support. The decision-making process starts. Informed decisions are made in line with Level of Need guidance, referrers are made aware of their decision within 3 working days.

Assessment

Child in need of immediate protection: Appropriate emergency action taken by police, NSPCC or social worker.
Section 47 assessment – child identified as at risk of significant harm, possible child protection plan
Section 17 assessment – child identified as in need and appropriate support identified.
All schools and colleges should allow local authorities access to facilitate arrangements.

Locality Panels

Contact Swindon will agenda the referral to a Locality Panel when a referral requires a multi-agency response. The Locality Panels include a wide range of professionals who can identify the next steps for a family, who their Lead Professional will be and what support services are available in the localities. The Locality Panels are part of the Core Safeguarding and support activity of Swindon Safeguarding Partnership.

At all stages, staff should consider the circumstances and re-refer if necessary. The emphasis is on ensuring that the child's best interests come first and where appropriate improve.

The Request for Help and Support should be completed for all referrals to Contact Swindon

Appendix C: If you have concerns about an adult

All staff, and visitors, working in our school understand and adhere to a staff code of conduct.

If you have a concern about an adult, raise your concerns immediately with the Principal who will refer to the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer).

The Principals are Nikki Wilkes & Suzanne Mole

If the Headteacher is not available, contact the most senior member of staff on site.

If your concern is about the Principal, contact the DSL - Dean Parsons –
Dean@wilkesacademy.co.uk

LADO 01793 463 854
LADO@swindon.gov.uk

NSPCC 0800 028 0285
help@nspcc.org.uk

For help and advice or if a member of staff feels their genuine concerns are not being addressed, general guidance can be found at:

Advice on whistleblowing <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.

Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Appendix D

Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

When a child tells me about abuse s/he has suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- Never promise confidentiality. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you may have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations. Add your name, date and signature to this record. Alter this to reflect your CP recording system, ensure any handwritten notes are given to the DSL for filing
- Pass this record on as soon as possible, immediately if significant risk is identified, to the DSL

It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures or investigate. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and ensure the child is supported through any disclosure process.

Appendix E: For college use only

SCHOOL		
DSL	Dean	Parsons
DDSL	Kay	Wilkes

LOCAL AUTHORITY		
Contact Swindon		contactswindon@swindon.gov.uk 01792 464646 Out of hours 01793 436699
MASH Education Adviser	Louise Forrester	LForrester@swindon.gov.uk
LADO	Louise Chandler	LADO@swindon.gov.uk
Lead Safeguarding Adviser	Tanya Westall	Twestall@swindon.gov.uk SafeguardingEducation@swindon.gov.uk
Safeguarding Officer	Suzanne Gregory	sgregory2@swindon.gov.uk

Police		
PCSO		
Prevent		Preventreferrals@wiltshire.police.uk
Police Intel		https://www.wiltshire.police.uk/police-forces/wiltshire-police/areas/about-us/about-us/Community-Partners-information-sharing-form/

Appendix F:

Early help - what staff should be aware of

Any child may benefit from early help, staff at Wilkes Academy should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.