



# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

2025/2026


## Policy issue and updates

Pages	Issue No.	Date
Whole document - new	1	December 2025

The following policy has been approved by the Divisional CEO and Executive Team.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis unless circumstances arise requiring the policy to be reviewed earlier.

Approved by Divisional CEO: December 2025

Board signatory: 

Planned Review: August 2026

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## 1. Policy Statement

**1.1** Progress Arc – Billinge School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and all staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors have a duty to act in the best interests of children at all times.

The school promotes a culture of vigilance, transparency, professional curiosity and respectful challenge where safeguarding is embedded across all aspects of school life.

This policy applies to all students, including those in the sixth form, alternative provision and online learning environments.

This policy is written in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017

This policy should be read alongside:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Procedures

## 2. Key Principles

**2.1** The school recognises that:

- Safeguarding and promoting welfare is everyone’s responsibility.
- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Children have a right to feel safe and be protected from harm.
- Early identification and intervention are essential.
- Some children are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.
- Effective safeguarding requires a coordinated multi-agency approach.

- Staff should maintain professional curiosity and act immediately where concerns arise.

The school will:

- Provide a safe and inclusive environment.
- Listen to and respect students.
- Identify concerns early.
- Take appropriate action promptly.
- Work effectively with families and external agencies.
- Maintain robust safeguarding systems and procedures.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 Proprietor/Governing Body

The proprietor/governing body will ensure that:

- Appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are in place.
- Safeguarding arrangements comply with statutory requirements.
- A suitable Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed.
- Staff receive appropriate safeguarding training.
- Safer recruitment procedures are followed.
- Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
- Safeguarding is regularly reviewed and monitored.
- Allegations against staff are managed appropriately.

### 3.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively.
- Promote a strong safeguarding culture.
- Ensure staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Support the DSL in carrying out their role.
- Ensure concerns are addressed promptly.

### 3.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL will:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to staff.
- Manage referrals to children's social care, police and other agencies.
- Maintain secure safeguarding records.
- Ensure safeguarding training is completed.
- Promote online safety.
- Support staff understanding of contextual safeguarding and vulnerability.
- Work with families and external agencies.
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- Ensure safeguarding information is transferred appropriately when students move schools.

Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the DSL.

### **3.4 Staff**

All staff will:

- Read and understand Part 1 of KCSIE.
- Know how to identify and report safeguarding concerns.
- Maintain professional curiosity.
- Understand local safeguarding procedures.
- Record concerns promptly and accurately.
- Act immediately if a child is at risk of harm.
- Understand expectations regarding conduct and boundaries.

## **4. Recognising Safeguarding Concerns**

### **4.1 Staff should be alert to indicators of:**

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child-on-child abuse
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- County lines involvement
- Domestic abuse
- Online abuse
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Mental health concerns
- Serious violence
- Honour-based abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Attendance concerns and children missing education

### **4.2 Safeguarding incidents may occur inside or outside school, including online.**

Staff should be particularly alert to the needs of vulnerable students, including:

- Students with SEND
- Students with SEMH needs
- Looked after and previously looked after children
- Children with social workers
- Young carers

- Students experiencing mental health difficulties
- Students at risk of exclusion or exploitation
- Persistently or severely absent students

## 5. Responding to Concerns

### 5.1 Immediate Risk

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm:

- Staff must act immediately.
- Emergency services should be contacted where necessary.
- The DSL must be informed as soon as possible.

### 5.2 Reporting Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be:

- Reported immediately to the DSL or deputy DSL.
- Recorded factually and accurately.
- Treated confidentially.

Staff should never assume somebody else has taken action.

Any staff member can report externally if they do not feel appropriate action has been taken (see section 13).

### 5.3 Early Help

The school recognises the importance of early intervention and may work with external agencies to provide support before concerns escalate.

### 5.4 Information Sharing

Information will be shared appropriately and lawfully in accordance with safeguarding duties and data protection legislation.

Fears about sharing information must not prevent action where a child is at risk.

## 6 Attendance and Children missing Education

**6.1** The school recognises that poor attendance, persistent absence and children missing education can be indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation or wider safeguarding concerns.

The school will:

- Monitor attendance closely.

- Investigate unexplained absences.
- Follow up persistent and severe absence.
- Work with families and external agencies.
- Make referrals where safeguarding concerns arise.
- The school will notify the local authority where required.

## 7 Child-on Child Abuse

**7.1** The school recognises that children can abuse other children.

This may include:

- Bullying
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence or harassment
- Upskirting
- Initiation or hazing behaviours
- Online abuse
- Image sharing abuse

**7.2** The school maintains a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

All concerns will be:

- Taken seriously
- Investigated promptly
- Risk assessed appropriately
- Managed in line with statutory guidance
- Recorded accurately
- Victims will be supported and protected.

## 8 Online Safety

**8.1** The school recognises that safeguarding includes online safety.

The school will:

- Maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring systems.
- Teach students about online safety.
- Respond appropriately to online concerns.
- Monitor emerging risks.
- Ensure staff understand online safeguarding risks.

**8.2** Students will be taught about:

- Safe online behaviour
- Healthy relationships

- Digital resilience
- Harmful content
- Cyberbullying
- Online exploitation
- Privacy and consent

## 9 Metal Health and Wellbeing

**9.1** The school recognises that mental health concerns may be an indicator that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering harm.

Staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions but should identify concerns and report them appropriately.

The school will work with families and external agencies where additional support is required.

## 10 Alternative Provision and Off-Site Arrangements

**10.1** The school will undertake appropriate safeguarding checks and quality assurance when students attend alternative provision or off-site education.

The school remains responsible for safeguarding students placed in alternative provision.

## 11 Safer Recruitment

**11.1** The school is committed to safer recruitment practices.

The school will:

- Undertake appropriate pre-employment checks.
- Maintain a Single Central Record.
- Verify identity, qualifications and suitability.
  
- Obtain enhanced DBS checks as required.
- Ensure safer recruitment training is completed by relevant staff.
- Visitors and contractors will be managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

## 12 Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns

All concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school will be taken seriously.

### 12.1 Allegations that Meet the Harm Threshold

Concerns that may indicate an adult has:

- Behaved in a way that harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way indicating unsuitability

must be reported immediately to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.

### 12.2 Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns are concerns about behaviour that do not meet the harm threshold but may be inconsistent with the staff code of conduct.

All low-level concerns must be:

- Reported promptly
- Recorded appropriately
- Reviewed for patterns or themes

The school promotes an open and transparent culture.

## 13 Whistleblowing

### 13.1 Staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice.

Concerns may be raised through:

- The DSL
- Headteacher
- Proprietor/governors
- Whistleblowing procedures
- External agencies where necessary

No member of staff will suffer detriment for raising genuine concerns.

## 14 Staff Training

**14.1** All staff will receive:

- Safeguarding and child protection training at induction
- Regular safeguarding updates
- Training appropriate to their role
- Online safety training
- Prevent awareness training

The DSL and deputies will undertake advanced safeguarding training updated at least every two years.

Training records will be maintained.

## 15 Record Keeping and Confidentiality

**15.1** Safeguarding records will:

- Be accurate, clear and factual
- Be stored securely
- Be accessed on a need-to-know basis
- Be transferred securely when students move schools

The school processes personal data in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

## 16 Monitoring and Review

**16.1** This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually or sooner if required
- Updated following changes in legislation or guidance
- Monitored by senior leaders and governors

Safeguarding practice will be regularly evaluated to ensure continued compliance and effectiveness.

## 17 Key Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Lotte Schol	01744 892 551 <a href="mailto:Lotte.schol@progress-arc.co.uk">Lotte.schol@progress-arc.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:safeguarding@progress-arc.co.uk">safeguarding@progress-arc.co.uk</a>
Deputy DSL	Rhian Smith	01744 892 551 <a href="mailto:Rhian.smith@progress-arc.co.uk">Rhian.smith@progress-arc.co.uk</a>
Headteacher	Susan Fletcher	01744 892 551 <a href="mailto:Susan.fletcher@progress-arc.co.uk">Susan.fletcher@progress-arc.co.uk</a>
Chair of Proprietor	Charlotte Barton	0151 559 1867 <a href="mailto:Charlotte.Barton@progress-education.co.uk">Charlotte.Barton@progress-education.co.uk</a>
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)		01744 671252 <a href="mailto:sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.uk">sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.uk</a>
Safeguarding Children's Partnership		01744 671266 <a href="mailto:safeguardingchildrenspartnership@sthelens.gov.uk">safeguardingchildrenspartnership@sthelens.gov.uk</a>
Police Emergency		999
Police Non-Emergency		101
NSPCC Helpline		0808 800 5000

## Appendix A: Types of Abuse

Brief definitions only. Full guidance available within KCSIE and statutory safeguarding guidance.)

### **Physical Abuse**

Causing physical harm to a child.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Persistent emotional maltreatment affecting emotional development.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities.

### **Neglect**

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs.

## Appendix B: Safeguarding Flowchart

