

## Arka Learning Safeguarding Policy

**Policy last updated: July 2024**

**Next update: July 2025**

### 1. Introduction, Government Guidance and Aims

Arka Learning is committed to the wellbeing and safeguarding of all children, adults and staff who attend its tuition centres. This policy's main aim is to provide all children, adults and staff with a comprehensive, secure and clear commitment to safeguarding and a framework to ensure all children attending Arka Learning tuition centres are protected from harm.

Under no circumstances must Arka Learning staff use physical force as a punishment.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is written with consideration of the following Department for Education statutory guidance:

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

and the following guidance from HM Government:

- Prevent Duty Guidance (2023)
- Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (2023)

and the following Department for Education non-statutory guidance:

- After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers (2023)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015)

In addition, this setting operates in accordance with the local authority in partnership to keep children safe. Details of the relevant local authorities are as follows:

Setting	Key Staff	Local authority	Website	Phone number	LADO contact
Arka Learning High Wycombe	DSL: Harrie Towndrow Deputy DSL: Samiya Khan	Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership	<a href="#">Click here.</a>	01296 383962 between 9am to 5.30pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5pm Friday.  If you need an urgent response outside of these hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0800 999 7677.	<a href="#">Click here.</a>

In cases where a criminal offence has been committed or it is suspected that one has been committed, the matter must be reported immediately to the local police force using the 101 service. In an emergency this must be reported using the 999 service.

Definitions of 'significant harm' are taken from Section 47 of The Children Act (1989)

This policy provides crucial information and must be read by all staff as part of their induction.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Arka Learning policies below:

- Staff Code of Conduct (Behaviour Policy) including Guidelines for Managing Children
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Centre Manager and Assistant Manager Recruitment Procedure
- Tutor Recruitment Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Infection Control Policy
- Lockdown Procedure
- Medication Policy
- Procedure for Arrival and Departure of Children
- Complaints Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Prevent and Counter-Terrorism Policy

It is available to all parents, responsible adults and staff who use our settings and is available on our public-facing website. In addition, [posters](#) at each setting display safeguarding information for staff, parents and children.

For the purpose of this policy, 'children' refers to any student under the age of 18 attending the setting. 'Adults' refers to parents or other responsible adults who drop off or collect their child at or from the setting. 'Staff' refers to those employed by the setting. 'Setting' refers to the tuition centre and 'wider setting' to the shopping centre or other building in which the tuition centre is located.

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that all staff working at Arka Learning understand the importance of safeguarding and that it is everyone's responsibility
- To support any child who makes a disclosure of abuse
- To ensure staff know who to inform in the event of a disclosure, concern or safeguarding issue and to ensure they are alert to the signs of possible child abuse
- To aid staff in understanding and recognising specific safeguarding concerns
- To ensure, in accordance with The Children Act 1989, that the welfare of the child is paramount at all times

## 2. Designated Safeguarding Leads

The Designated Safeguarding Lead at Arka Learning is

- Name: Josh Pull
- Title: Director
- Contact: [josh@arklearning.com](mailto:josh@arklearning.com) | 01494 924 500

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads at Arka Learning are

- Name: William Orr-Ewing
- Title: Director
- Contact: [will@keystonetutors.com](mailto:will@keystonetutors.com) | 01494 924 500

Details of The Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads for each centre are as follows:

Centre	Designated Safeguarding Lead (Centre Manager)	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Assistant Manager)
High Wycombe 01494 924 500	Harrie Towndrow <a href="mailto:Harrie.towndrow@arklearning.com">Harrie.towndrow@arklearning.com</a>	Samiya Khan <a href="mailto:Samiya.khan@arklearning.com">Samiya.khan@arklearning.com</a>

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Arka Learning settings is to:

- Be a point of contact for staff concerns and advice on safeguarding and pastoral issues
- Have overall responsibility for safeguarding (this cannot be delegated)
- Raise awareness of safeguarding amongst staff, adults and children attending the setting
- In conjunction with the DSL at Arka Learning, who will be the point of contact for ongoing investigations and cases, manage referrals from staff, adults and children to the local authority
- In conjunction with the DSL at Arka Learning, who will manage these referrals in accordance with local authority policies and procedures, refer concerns over staff to the Local Area Designated Officer as required
- Manage the record-keeping of safeguarding concerns and ensure records are kept up to date
- To ensure all staff have up to date training in line with our recruitment policies

- To provide updates to staff on safeguarding issues as needed and on changes in legislation, statutory and non-statutory advice
- To update their own Level 3 safeguarding training at least once every two years using an external provider including Safer Recruitment training and Prevent training
- To be a point of contact for issues or queries around Safer Recruitment
- Make referrals to the local authority Prevent Officer under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) at Arka Learning settings are trained to the same level as the DSL and can deliver training to new members of staff; however they must

- Consult with the DSL as soon as possible over any referrals to the local authority
- Not assume lead responsibility for safeguarding at the centre

If the DSL is absent for annual leave or ill health, one of the DDSLs will be appointed to interim DSL for this period.

If the DSL is absent for an extended period which has not been agreed in advance (over 14 days), one of the DDSLs will be appointed permanently to the role of DSL.

### **3. Safeguarding Issues**

For further details and definitions of types of abuse and neglect, staff can reference DfE guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2023) and *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2023). Staff training will also reference these documents including definitions of abuse and neglect.

#### **Definition of Safeguarding**

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 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
- promoting 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
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

#### **a. Types of abuse**

For the purposes of this policy, Arka Learning staff should be aware of and vigilant to the following types of abuse and safeguarding issues:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child on child abuse (see below)
- Extremism and radicalisation
- Sexual harassment
- Bullying
- Substance abuse
- Online exploitation and abuse
- Domestic abuse

#### **b. Contextual safeguarding**

Staff should also be aware that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can occur outside the home environment and should be particularly vigilant to reports of these. These contextual safeguarding issues form part of staff training. These include:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Honour Based Abuse
- Knife Crime
- Children Absent from Education

#### **c. Child on child abuse**

Staff should be vigilant to the possibility of child on child abuse at the setting. Close supervision of children attending the setting alongside high staff-children ratios is designed to mitigate this risk, however staff should maintain the attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Such abuse can include:

- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
- harmful sexual behaviour including but not limited to the use of inappropriate sexual language, sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos, upskirting, sexual violence
- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as:
  - hitting
  - kicking
  - shaking
  - biting
  - hair pulling
  - otherwise causing physical harm

In the event of suspected child on child abuse involving one or more children who attend the setting against another pupil who attends the setting and where there is reasonable cause to suspect significant harm the case must be referred to the local authority.

#### **d. Children with Additional Educational Needs, Disabilities and other vulnerabilities**

Staff at Arka Learning should be aware that children with Additional Educational Needs, disabilities or health issues may face additional safeguarding issues. Staff should be vigilant to:

- Any indicators of possible abuse not in keeping with the child's additional needs or history
- Any communication challenges the child faces in disclosing the abuse (for example, if the child is non-verbal)
- The fact that children with additional needs or other vulnerabilities are disproportionately impacted by abuse and behaviours such as bullying
- That children who are (or are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans are more likely to suffer child on child abuse and are more vulnerable to abuse

#### **4. Reporting Concerns about a child**

All staff at Arka Learning should be aware that barriers to reporting abuse exist, and that some children may not be ready or not know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Staff should also be aware that children with Additional Educational Needs or disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse. Staff should therefore never assume that an issue has been reported or disclosed by another person, and should always speak to the DSL or DDSL if they have a concern about a child.

If a child discloses abuse:

- Staff should stop and listen straight away without delay
- Staff should write notes as soon as possible after the conversation
- Staff must not guarantee confidentiality
- Use TED – Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me. Staff can ask children whether they have been harmed and the nature of that harm, without asking leading questions. Training will be offered to staff on dealing with disclosures.
- Staff must not conduct their own investigation but must refer to the DSL immediately
- Staff must maintain a calm and professional attitude and prioritise the wellbeing of the child at all times.

Reports to the DSL or DDSL must be undertaken:

- As soon as possible and within 2 hours of the concern being raised or suspected
- For a child at risk or suspected to be at risk of significant harm, the concern must be raised immediately

- In person or by telephone. The staff member will then be requested to follow this up in writing. For safeguarding concerns, staff should not assume the DSL/ DDSL has read an email; they must speak to them.
- It is usually best practice to share concerns with parents/ carers. However, for children at risk of significant harm (or where there is reasonable cause to suspect this), it may not be appropriate to do so. Decisions on whether to share information must be made in conjunction with the DSL. It may be helpful to refer to the following guidance:
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

DDSLs must consult with DSLs over any concerns raised by staff members. Information must only be shared on a need-to-know basis. Safeguarding details relating to a child must only be accessible to the safeguarding team.

The DSL will decide, following investigation, if the concern should be raised with the local authority. If a child is at risk of significant harm, in accordance with Section 47 of The Children Act (1989), statutory child protection agencies will conduct the investigation and the DSL must not investigate. At all times, decision-making in this regard must be documented, including:

- Who raised the concern (include details of date, time, job title)
- Who was the concern raised about (include details of child's name, date of birth, address, school)
- What decision was made and why – what were the reasons for making the referral
- Who was consulted
- What action was taken
- Whether parents/ carers were consulted and if not, why not

Staff who have reported a concern will be offered support through a 1:1 meeting with the DSL to assess any further support or training needs.

## **5. Reporting concerns about a staff member**

All staff at Arka Learning should be vigilant to the possibility of allegations against staff (both themselves and others) and should ensure they are familiar with the Staff Code of Conduct.

### **a. Allegations which meet the harm threshold**

Allegations of abuse against staff should immediately be brought to the attention of the DSL or DDSL. The DDSL must immediately inform the DSL if allegations are brought to them. If the allegation concerns the DDSL or DSL this should be brought to the attention of the Arka Learning DSL or DDSL.

If the allegation concerns the DSL of Arka Learning and it meets the harm threshold, the DSL of the setting must report the allegation to the Local Authority Designated Officer directly using the contact information on page 1 of this policy.

Allegations which meet the harm threshold are those in which a member of staff 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.

In all cases involving allegations against staff which meet the harm threshold, the DSL must raise this immediately with the LADO contact named on page 1 of this policy. The DSL must not investigate the allegation but must act on the advice of the LADO at all times, including decisions on suspension or dismissal following an investigation. If the DSL is unsure whether the allegation meets the harm threshold they should seek advice from the LADO immediately.

#### **b. Allegations which do not meet the harm threshold ('low-level concerns')**

The term 'low-level' is used to describe any concern involving an adult working in a setting who may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct (in and out of the setting) yet is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant.

Examples of 'low-level' concerns are:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to setting policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door where there is no clear reason to do so, or
- humiliating children.

#### **c. Recording of staff allegations and concerns**

##### **i) Allegations which meet the harm threshold**

The initial report of an allegation which meets the harm threshold should be recorded, alongside the date and time of the referral to the LADO and a brief summary of the conversation including any action advised by the LADO. The DSL will at all times follow the advice of the LADO after an initial referral has been made, including referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if appropriate following the outcome of the investigation.

In circumstances where it is necessary, due to the outcome of a LADO investigation and on their advice, the DSL must make a referral to the DBS. The legal duty on a regulated activity provider to make a referral still applies if the staff member concerned has been re-deployed (for example, to another location), or has resigned, retired, or left the organisation. It also



applies even when a referral has also been made to a local authority safeguarding team or professional regulator. Failure to do this is a criminal offence.

## **ii) Low level concerns**

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and any decisions made and action taken. Records must be clearly date-stamped.

These records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Records should be reviewed on a regular basis by the DSL so that potential patterns of inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the setting should decide on a course of action in conjunction with Arka Learning Human Resources, either through its disciplinary procedures, or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold, in a referral to the LADO.

## **6. Useful Contact Details**

### Arka Learning contacts

Please see clause 2 above.

### Local authority contacts

Please see clause 1 above.

### Specialist helplines

Police – immediate threat - 999

Police – serious concerns – 101

Prevent (non-emergency advice) – 0800 011 3764

NSPCC helpline – 0808 800 5000

Childline – 0800 1111

Ofsted – 0300 123 4666