Altrincham CE
Aided Primary School

'Some fell on good earth, and produced a harvest beyond his wildest dreams.'

Matthew 13:8, The Message

Grow Strong and Bear Fruit

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Academic Year 2026-27

Policy Name	ACE Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Date Policy Created	**September 2026**
Date of Last Review	**September 2025**
Date of Next Review	**September 2027**
Policy Prepared By	Sam Halliwell
Approving Committee	Altrincham CE Primary School Governing Body
This Document Replaces	**ACE Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy 25-26**
Overall Responsibility for Policy	Altrincham CE Primary School Governing Body
Statutory Guidance Grounding	**Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) September 2026**

Foreword by Laura Thomson – Head of School

At Altrincham CE Primary School our commitment to safeguarding the welfare of pupils is given the highest priority. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting pupils from harm. As a school, governing body and staff we have worked to develop and maintain a 'culture of vigilance' to ensure that signs and symptoms of abuse are recognised, thus the opportunity for those wishing to cause harm to children is drastically reduced. Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We believe that Altrincham CE Primary School should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes all pupils' social, physical, emotional, spiritual and moral development. We will always act in the best interest of a child.

Definition of Safeguarding

In line with statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) September 2026, we define safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge (previously Early Help, now aligned to community-based Family Help)
- 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, and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The term 'children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

Purpose and Principles

1. The purpose of this document is to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the arrangements that Altrincham CE Primary School (hereinafter referred to as 'the school') have in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils. It provides guidance to help staff who may have concerns about the safety or welfare of a child and sets out the school's position in relation to the safeguarding process.

2. This policy:
i. Has been written in line with the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance – Keeping children safe in education, September 2026, and any other relevant UK legislation and government guidance including the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, and departmental advice *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners*.
ii. Applies at all times when the school is providing services or activities directly under the management of the school staff.

iii. Is publicly available on the school's website, and a printed copy can be made available via the school office.
iv. Reflects Trafford Strategic Safeguarding Partnership Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

3. This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by the Governors and should in particular be read in conjunction with the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of children:
i. Behaviour & Relationships Policy (incorporating anti-bullying, cyberbullying, and prejudice-based harassment)
ii. Staff Code of Conduct & Low-Level Concerns Policy
iii. Online Safety & Acceptable Use Policy
iv. Whistleblowing Policy
v. Missing Child Policy
vi. Safer Recruitment Policy
vii. Data Protection & Privacy Policies
viii. Anti-bullying policy

Key Information

Below is the contact directory of key personnel with designated responsibilities for safeguarding at Altrincham CE Primary School for the **2026-27** academic year:

Role	Name	Contact Details
Chair of Governing Body	Mr James Chillman	Tel: 0161 928 7288 Email: jchillman@altrinchamceprimaryschool.co.uk
Head of School & Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Laura Thomson	Tel: 0161 928 7288 Email: lthomson@altrinchamceprimaryschool.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)	Leighonie Flynn Helen Dunn-Barrett	Tel: 0161 928 7288 Email: lflynn@altrinchamceprimaryschool.co.uk hdunn-barrett@

Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC	Laura Thomson	Tel: 0161 928 7288 Email: acehead@altrinchamceprimaryschool.co.uk

Creating a Safeguarding Culture in School

It is important to us at ACE that all children feel safe and supported in our setting. Safeguarding is our priority across all aspects of our work and our policy underpins the rigorous practice that takes place in the school to best protect our pupils and staff.

All staff are aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. All staff are encouraged to exercise professional curiosity and understand what to look for in the early identification of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues such as exploitation are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition of one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. We explicitly recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice, and other forms of discrimination, which can directly impact their welfare, mental health, and willingness to seek support. All staff are trained to be alert to these signs and ensure such concerns are fully integrated into our safeguarding practice.

An age-appropriate safeguarding curriculum is rolled out across all year groups to build pupils' resilience and awareness. This includes regular e-safety lessons, PHSE/Relationship lessons (NSPCC PANTS), and key transition teaching about sexting, digital consent, and knowing when, where, and how to seek help.

Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Leads (and Deputies)

The DSLs take lead responsibility for safeguarding with the support of the Deputy DSLs and will:

- Be available during term time for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Lead on referrals to local authority children's social care (Trafford First Response), the Channel Programme or Prevent programme where there is a radicalisation concern, the DBS where relevant, and the Police as required.
- Co-ordinate the school's representation at multi-agency meetings relating to safeguarding (including strategy discussions, Child in Need meetings, Core Groups, Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences, and TTT meetings).
- Complete assessments to coordinate early intervention. Where necessary the DSL or another identified person will complete a Family Help Assessment (previously known as an Early Help Assessment) to identify specific needs that require the assistance of other services outside of the school.

When engaging other services outside of our school to form part of a Team around the Family, we will utilise Trafford's Strengths and Needs form to support Family Help Assessments to ensure this is formalised in a consistent way for all agencies involved. We will utilise our internal support network of Safeguarding and Pastoral Teams and document the Family Help provided on our own internal systems - CPOMS. When appropriate and with parental consent, we will refer to Trafford Teams Together for further support.

• Work to understand the views of students, maintain high aspirations for the cohort of children who have or have had a social worker, and ensure pupil safety records are transferred securely to new schools within 5 working days.

• Maintain their own specialist knowledge, updating statutory safeguarding training at least every two years and renewing knowledge of local procedures and updates annually.

Governing Body

The governing body of ACE will:

• Review and approve this policy at least annually and hold the school leadership to account over its implementation.

• Appoint a safeguarding governor to oversee safeguarding compliance and the effectiveness of this policy.

• Read and understand Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, ensuring that mechanisms are in place to assist all staff to understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities.

• Ensure the school operates robust, compliant filtering and monitoring systems and processes across the IT network, assigning clear roles to manage systems and reviewing provision at least annually.

• Adhere strictly to the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, ensuring that safety-related information is processed and shared lawfully, securely, and fairly to protect children's outcomes.

All Staff Members

All staff, regardless of whether they work directly with children, must:

• Read at least Part One of KCSiE 2026 and participate in annual, regular training updates covering online safety, filtering and monitoring, and early identification of harm.

• Maintain a strict attitude of *'it could happen here'* regarding child abuse and always act in the best interests of the child.

• Understand the local early help processes, including Family Help Assessments, and the statutory criteria for escalating concerns to Children's Social Care under Section 17 (Children in Need) and Section 47 (significant harm) of the Children Act 1989.

• Know how to manage disclosures, maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality, reassuring the child that they are being supported, and never promising to keep secrets.

• Exercise professional curiosity and identify contextual and extra-familial risks, online safety concerns, and whistleblowing procedures.

• Know the direct reporting pathways for poor practice or allegations against staff, including immediate reporting to the Head of School (or Chair of Governors if the allegation concerns the Head of School/Executive Head).

Responding to and Recording Concerns

When staff or visitors to the school have a safeguarding concern, they must promptly record it in writing via CPOMS and alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy DSL) immediately. If the concern is urgent, a verbal report must be made without any delay.

All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused or exploited. This must not prevent staff from exercising professional curiosity and discussing concerns with the DSL. The DSL or deputy will determine the appropriate pathway, which may include:

- Internal pastoral support and intervention.
- Initiating a Family Help Assessment using local multi-agency early intervention structures.
- Immediate statutory referral to Trafford Children's First Response (social care) and/or the police.

If the DSL and deputies are unavailable, staff must not delay and must contact local Children's Social Care directly for advice or to make a referral. CPOMS records must include a clear, comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how it was followed up, a note of actions taken and decisions reached, and the clear rationale for the decisions.

All personal information will be processed securely in line with UK GDPR. The school is also a fully active partner in Operation Encompass, facilitating immediate domestic abuse notification sharing from the police to enable pastoral wrap-around support by the start of the next school day.

Online Safety

Technology is a significant component in almost all safeguarding and child wellbeing issues, often taking place concurrently both online and offline. The school's approach to online safety is structured across the four main areas of risk:

- **Content:** Exposure to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content (pornography, disinformation, fake news, hate speech, radicalisation).
- **Contact:** Harmful online interaction with other users (online grooming, exploitation, peer pressure, commercial advertising).
- **Conduct:** Personal online behaviour causing harm (consensual/non-consensual sharing of nudes, cyberbullying, offensive messaging).
- **Commerce:** Financial risks (gambling, phishing, fraud, inappropriate advertising).

We educate pupils on online safety and digital literacy through PHSE and computing, aligning our behaviour policy and staff code of conduct to support acceptable use. If there are concerns about a child displaying advanced technical skills but straying into cyber-dependent offences (e.g. unauthorised network access or denial of service attacks), the DSL will consider making a referral to the police-led Cyber Choices Programme. This preventative programme aims to divert young people into positive, legal pathways for their technical skills.

Filtering and Monitoring

ACE has robust filtering and monitoring systems in place across our IT network and school-owned devices, overseen by our IT support provider (HG-IT). The DSL has overall responsibility for understanding and monitoring the effectiveness of these systems, which are reviewed at least annually.

We align our systems with DfE filtering and monitoring standards, ensuring we block harmful and inappropriate content without over-blocking, which could unreasonably impact teaching and learning. We refer to the DfE's latest guidance on generative AI to inform our approach to digital literacy and online safety. All staff are trained on filtering and monitoring systems, understanding their specific roles in recognising and immediately reporting any system bypasses, concerns, or flagged content to the safeguarding team.

Whistleblowing

At Altrincham CE Primary School, any poor practice, safety concerns, or allegations that working adults may be posing a risk of harm to children must be reported immediately. Concerns regarding staff members must be referred directly to the Head of School or Acting Executive Headteacher. Concerns regarding the Head of School or Acting Executive Headteacher must be referred directly to James Chillman, Chair of Governors.

Staff can also contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline (0800 028 0285 / help@nspcc.org.uk) as an alternative route if they feel unable to raise concerns internally, or feel that their concerns are not being addressed effectively.

Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

Family Help & Support Before Statutory Intervention

Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention, including universal services and community-based Family Help (which replaces the previous concept of Early Help). All school staff are trained to be particularly alert to the potential need for additional support for children within the following highly vulnerable cohorts:

- Children with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities (who may face communication barriers or cognitive understanding difficulties, or have indicators of abuse falsely attributed to their condition).
- Children with mental health needs, including self-harm, eating disorders, or suicidal ideation.
- Looked-after children (LAC) or previously looked-after children (PLAC).
- Young carers.
- Children who are pregnant and/or are parents themselves.
- Children who have exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours.
- Children who have been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, are on a part-time timetable, or are at risk of exclusion.
- Privately fostered children.

• Children in challenging family circumstances (substance misuse, parental mental health, parental custody, or domestic abuse).

Children with Low Attendance & Children Missing Education (CME)

Low or erratic attendance can act as a vital warning sign of serious safeguarding risks, including abuse, neglect, county lines, substance misuse, child exploitation, and radicalisation. Our office team and attendance lead thoroughly track attendance daily. In accordance with statutory school attendance regulations, the school will immediately make a return to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register, and we maintain robust procedures for notifying the local authority of unauthorised or prolonged absences.

Alternative Provision (AP) & Off-Site Educational Placements

While Altrincham CE Primary School does not currently utilise Alternative Provision, if we do place any pupil in an off-site AP setting, we recognise that we remain legally responsible for their safety, attendance, and general wellbeing. The school will undertake robust quality assurance to ensure the AP provider has appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place, and we will maintain continuous contact, regardless of the hours the pupil spends at the AP setting.

The Prevent Duty

The school takes an active stance on meeting the duties placed upon us by the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. We build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by actively promoting fundamental British values (democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law, and mutual respect/tolerance). Staff are trained to recognise signs of a child being drawn into extremist ideologies and know how to make a Prevent referral. The DSL is responsible for coordinating with Trafford's multi-agency Channel panel where a voluntary, confidential support programme is required.

Site Safety & Controlling Access to School Premises

All staff have a responsibility to maintain a secure site and immediately report security concerns. Visitors' identities are verified at entry. green lanyards are issued to visitors who have presented a valid, verified DBS certificate. Red lanyards are issued to those who have not; red-lanyard visitors must be accompanied by school staff at all times.

The school operates a zero-tolerance approach to threatening, abusive, or violent behaviour from visitors or parents. Under national guidance, the school has the authority to bar individuals from the premises if their behaviour poses a risk of harm or threat to staff or pupils. This bar must be communicated in writing, allowing the individual to present their side by a set deadline, with the decision reviewed periodically.

Child-on-Child Abuse

At ACE, we believe all children have a right to learn in a safe environment, and we enforce a strict, zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. We recognise that children of any age or gender are capable of abusing others, which can happen both online and offline.

Child-on-child abuse includes bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, upskirting, initiation rituals, and the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes. All staff must recognise that racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour may have a significant impact on a child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety and must be considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.

We minimise risks through our PSHE curriculum. We ensure that abusive behaviours are never downplayed or dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up', as this normalises abuse and prevents children from reporting. Where there is a report of child-on-child abuse, we conduct a thorough investigation, provide immediate support and mentors to both the victim and perpetrator, and complete a formal safety risk assessment in cases involving sexual violence or harassment.

Domestic Abuse & Operation Encompass Statutory Duty

The school recognises children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right if they see, hear, or experience the effects of the abuse. We work in partnership with Greater Manchester Police and Trafford's Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to support affected families, using DASH Risk Identification Checklists (RIC) and training provided by Trafford Domestic Abuse Service (TDAS).

In November 2025, a new statutory duty was placed on police forces to notify a child's educational setting if they have reasonable grounds to believe a child is a victim of domestic abuse. This duty applies to all children connected to a household where police attended an incident, whether the child was physically present or not. These notifications are sent directly to our Acehead@ inbox to ensure the DSL (as the Operation Encompass Key Adult) has immediate oversight. The notification must contain vital context such as the child's protected characteristics, relationship to the perpetrator, and the 'voice of the child' (their direct words or behaviour at the scene). Crucially, to protect victim anonymity under the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1992, the police notification must never contain reference or information regarding sexual offences disclosed during the incident.

Serious Violence

Serious violence remains a significant safeguarding threat, often associated with criminal exploitation, county lines, or peer conflict. Staff must immediately report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon to the DSL. The DSL will conduct an immediate safety assessment to evaluate the risk to the individual and others, put in place a formal preventative safety and support plan, and consider action to de-escalate conflict. We recognise that serious violence risks are statistically higher for pupils who have

experienced disrupted education (including suspensions, exclusions, or AP). Furthermore, we are alert to the fact that youth violence peaks in the hours immediately before and after the school day; we work collaboratively with partners under the Serious Violence Duty (Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022) to establish a coordinated safety response during these times.

Staff Learning and Development

Professional learning is given the highest priority. All new staff undergo a comprehensive safeguarding induction, which includes reading and understanding KCSiE 2026, Working Together 2026, the Behaviour Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, and Trafford's local Family Help pathways.

All staff participate in annual safeguarding updates and regular briefing sessions to ensure they are competent and confident in carrying out their responsibilities. All training and professional development are formally logged in personnel files to ensure compliance and identify learning needs.

Safer Recruitment

Senior managers and the Governing Body enforce stringent recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that no individual commences work or volunteering at the school unless all required checks are completed to a satisfactory level.

Checks undertaken and recorded on the school's Single Central Record (SCR) include: Enhanced DBS checks, Barred List checks, verification of physical and mental fitness, professional references (at least one from the current employer, thoroughly checked for gaps), identity and right to work in the UK, qualification checks, prohibition from teaching checks, and childcare disqualification checks. At least one member of every interview panel will have completed formal safer recruitment training.

Managing Allegations Against Professionals Who Work with Children

All concerns and allegations against staff members, supply teachers, volunteers, or contractors must be managed in accordance with our Managing Allegations Policy. If a staff member behaves in a way that indicates they may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offence, or pose a risk of harm, this must be reported immediately to the Head of School or Acting Executive Headteacher. If the concern involves the Headteacher, it must be referred directly to James Chillman, Chair of Governors.

The school will refer all qualifying allegations to the Trafford Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. We will cooperate fully with investigations, ensuring we do not cease using supply staff due to safeguarding concerns without establishing the facts and consulting the LADO. If an individual in regulated activity is dismissed or removed due to safeguarding harm, we hold a statutory legal requirement to refer the case to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and, where relevant, the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

Glossary of Safeguarding Terms

A Child: A person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others.

Family Help: Provides early intervention and support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Replaces the terms 'Early Help' and 'Early Help Assessment' to align with the community-based, targeted intervention structures under Working Together and KCSiE 2026.

Operation Encompass: A national agreement facilitating information sharing between police forces and school settings. Includes a statutory duty (introduced in November 2025) requiring police to notify school DSLs of domestic abuse incidents in connected households, containing vital details like the 'voice of the child' and child's protected characteristics, while strictly omitting references to sexual offences to protect victim anonymity.

Serious Violence Safety Plan: A proactive safety and support plan implemented by the DSL following risk assessments when a child is identified as carrying or using a weapon, or exhibiting indicators of being drawn into violent peer conflict, county lines, or criminal exploitation. Works in partnership with local authorities under the Serious Violence Duty 2022.

Cyber Choices: A nationwide preventative police programme led by the National Crime Agency (NCA) and supported by the Home Office. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing or being drawn into low-level cyber-dependent offences (illegal hacking, DDoS, malware) and direct them positively.

Prejudice-Based Harm: Harm, harassment, racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour directed at individuals or groups. Recognised as a critical safeguarding risk that impacts a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, and willingness to seek support.

Temporary Accommodation Duty: A statutory duty under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act requiring local housing authorities in England to notify educational institutions when a child is placed in temporary housing by local authorities, enabling schools to establish immediate targeted pastoral and safeguarding support.

Private Fostering: An arrangement made privately for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, for 28 days or more. Schools hold a mandatory duty to notify the local authority immediately upon becoming aware of such arrangements.

Appendix 1: Contact Details for Further Support

Agency / Service	Telephone	Email / Website

Trafford Children's First Response (Social Care Front Door)	0161 912 5125	FirstResponse@trafford.gov.uk
Trafford Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	0161 912 5125 (LADO inbox)	LADO@trafford.gov.uk
Social Care Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team	0161 912 2020	Emergency Services: Dial 999
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	0800 028 0285	help@nspcc.org.uk
Trafford Strategic Safeguarding Partnership (TSSP)	0161 911 8687	TSSP@trafford.gov.uk Website: TSSP Trafford