



Sycamore Hall Preparatory School Safeguarding Policy

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SYCAMORE HALL PREPARATORY SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

It is the Local Authority intent that ALL educational establishments will be effective for safeguarding.

1. RATIONALE

At Sycamore Hall Preparatory School, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

This policy has been developed with regard to:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- The statutory guidance relating to safer recruitment
- The Prevent duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Relevant equality, data protection and safeguarding legislation
- Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) procedures and local safeguarding arrangements.

● **CURRENT OFFICIAL LINK:** Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

● **CURRENT OFFICIAL LINK:** Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

● **CURRENT LOCAL LINK:** Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership

<https://dscp.org.uk/>

This policy takes account of local safeguarding arrangements and is intended to ensure that all children at Sycamore Hall Preparatory School are protected from harm and receive appropriate support when concerns arise.

This policy applies to everyone working on behalf of Sycamore Hall Preparatory School, including senior leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, volunteers, agency staff, contractors, students and anyone else working with children on the school's behalf.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect children at Sycamore Hall Preparatory School from harm;
- to promote their welfare and development;

- to provide staff, volunteers, children and families with clear safeguarding principles and procedures;
- to ensure that safeguarding concerns are recognised and acted upon promptly;
- to ensure that children are listened to and their views taken seriously;
- to ensure that the school works effectively with parents, carers and external agencies;
- to ensure that staff understand their individual safeguarding responsibilities;
- to provide a clear framework for responding to concerns about children and allegations concerning adults working with children.

We recognise that safeguarding is not limited to child protection. It includes promoting children's welfare, preventing harm, identifying children who may need additional help and taking action to protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm.

3. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read alongside the school's other policies and procedures, including:

- Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Managing Medicines and Intimate Care Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Children Missing from Education procedures
- Prevent Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy
- Equality Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Educational Visits Policy.

4. IMPORTANT SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

School contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Mrs Susan Nicklin

Email: sycamorehall@tiscali.co.uk

Telephone: 07765 905637

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Helen Grassi

Email: helenlgrassi@gmail.com

Telephone: 07403 258166

Operation Encompass contact

Mrs Susan Nicklin

Online Safety Lead

Mrs Susan Nicklin

Mental Health Lead

Mrs Susan Nicklin

Doncaster safeguarding contacts**Children's Social Care / MASH****Children's Social Care / Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

Telephone: **01302 737777**

Out of hours: 01302 796000

Emergency: 999

Doncaster has changed its safeguarding referral arrangements. Safeguarding referrals are now made by telephone rather than through the previous online referral process.

● **CURRENT LOCAL INFORMATION:** Doncaster currently directs safeguarding concerns to MASH on 01302 737777, with 01302 796000 used out of hours.

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/report-a-concern-about-a-child>

Early Help

Early Help Hub: **01302 734110**

Early Help Coordinator duty line: **01302 736250**

Early Help supports children and families at an early stage where additional help may prevent difficulties from becoming more serious.

● **CURRENT LOCAL INFORMATION:** Doncaster currently gives 01302 734110 as the Early Help Hub number and 01302 736250 for Early Help Coordinators.

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/early-help-professionals>

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Telephone: **01302 737332**

Email: LADO@doncaster.gov.uk

The LADO should be contacted where there is an allegation or concern about an adult who works with children which may meet the relevant threshold.

● **CURRENT LOCAL INFORMATION:** Doncaster's LADO page currently gives 01302 737332 and LADO@doncaster.gov.uk.

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/local-authority-designated-officer>

Mental Health

For urgent advice concerning a child's mental health:

01302 796191

Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership

● **CURRENT OFFICIAL LINK:**

<https://dscp.org.uk/>

Current DSCP contact email: dscp@doncaster.gov.uk.

5. INTRODUCTION

At Sycamore Hall Preparatory School we believe that:

- children should never experience abuse or neglect;
- every child has the right to feel safe and protected;
- the welfare of children is paramount;
- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- children should be listened to and treated with respect;
- concerns should be acted upon promptly;
- effective safeguarding depends upon strong relationships between children, families, school staff and other agencies.

We recognise that:

- abuse and neglect can happen anywhere;
- safeguarding concerns may arise inside or outside school;
- children may experience harm online as well as in person;
- children can be harmed by adults or by other children;
- some children are more vulnerable to particular safeguarding risks;
- a child's behaviour, attendance, appearance, emotional wellbeing or academic performance may change when they are experiencing difficulties;
- children may not recognise that they are being abused or exploited;
- children may find it difficult to tell an adult what is happening;
- safeguarding concerns can sometimes arise from apparently small or low-level incidents;
- early identification and appropriate support can prevent concerns from escalating.

6. SAFEGUARDING DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- 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; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

This reflects the current safeguarding framework set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

7. TERMINOLOGY

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The member of staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

A member of staff who supports the DSL and can undertake safeguarding responsibilities in their absence.

LADO

Local Authority Designated Officer. The LADO provides advice and oversees the management of allegations against adults who work with children.

DSCP

Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Child Protection

The activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Safeguarding

The broader responsibility to promote children's welfare, prevent harm and respond appropriately when concerns arise.

Child

For the purposes of safeguarding, a child means anyone under the age of 18.

Staff

Anyone working for or on behalf of the school, whether paid or unpaid.

Parent/carer

Includes birth parents and others with parental responsibility or a caring role.

8. THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

The Headteacher will:

- ensure that the school has an appropriately trained DSL and DDSL;
 - ensure that the DSL has sufficient time, resources and support to undertake the role effectively;
 - ensure that safeguarding remains a priority throughout the school;
 - ensure that all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
 - ensure that staff receive appropriate induction and safeguarding training;
 - ensure that staff receive regular safeguarding updates;
 - ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed;
 - ensure that allegations against staff are dealt with in accordance with the school's procedures and local LADO arrangements;
 - ensure that appropriate referrals are made to the LADO, Children's Social Care, the police or other agencies when required;
 - ensure safeguarding records are securely maintained;
 - ensure the school works effectively with parents and external agencies;
 - ensure that online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements are appropriate;
 - ensure the school maintains an effective safeguarding culture.
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9. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The DSL will:

- take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection;
- act as a source of advice, support and expertise for staff;
- ensure that staff understand the school's safeguarding procedures;
- ensure safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately;
- maintain appropriate safeguarding records;
- liaise with Children's Social Care, the police, health professionals, the LADO and other agencies as appropriate;
- ensure safeguarding arrangements remain effective during school holidays;
- ensure that staff are aware of local safeguarding arrangements;
- ensure the safeguarding policy is reviewed at least annually;
- ensure that staff receive safeguarding updates throughout the year;
- contribute to assessments and plans concerning children;
- understand the needs of children who have or have had a social worker;
- consider the impact safeguarding concerns may have on attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing;
- take lead responsibility for understanding the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements.

The DSL will also ensure that safeguarding concerns are appropriately recorded, including the concern, action taken, decisions made, reasons for decisions and outcomes.

KCSIE 2026 emphasises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that staff must act immediately on concerns and report them to the DSL or deputy without delay.

10. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff have an individual responsibility for safeguarding.

All staff must:

- read Part One of KCSIE 2026 in full;
- understand the school's safeguarding policy and procedures;
- know who the DSL and DDSL are;
- attend safeguarding training;
- recognise signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- understand how to respond to a child who discloses a concern;
- report concerns without delay;
- record concerns accurately;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- never promise a child complete confidentiality;
- share information appropriately where necessary to protect a child;
- follow the school's online safety procedures;
- follow the school's code of conduct.

KCSIE 2026 specifically states that all staff must read Part One in full. The former shorter Annex A arrangement should therefore not be retained as the school's alternative to Part One.

11. CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Any member of staff who has a safeguarding concern must report it to the DSL or DDSL without delay.

Staff should not:

- investigate the concern themselves;
- ask leading questions;
- promise confidentiality;
- assume someone else will report the concern;
- delay reporting while attempting to gather further information.

If a child makes a disclosure, staff should:

1. listen carefully;
2. remain calm;
3. allow the child to speak;
4. avoid leading questions;
5. acknowledge what the child has said;
6. explain that the information may need to be shared to keep them safe;
7. report the concern to the DSL/DDSL immediately;
8. make an accurate written record.

If the DSL or DDSL is unavailable and the concern is urgent, staff should take appropriate action themselves, including contacting Children's Social Care or the police where necessary.

If a child is in immediate danger, call **999**.

12. INFORMATION SHARING

Information sharing is an essential part of safeguarding.

Data protection legislation must not be treated as a reason to avoid sharing information where sharing is necessary to protect a child.

Information should be:

- relevant;
- accurate;
- necessary;
- proportionate;
- securely shared with those who need to know.

Staff should record the reason for significant information-sharing decisions.

The school will follow current statutory safeguarding guidance and applicable data protection requirements.

13. EARLY HELP

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School recognises the importance of identifying children and families who may benefit from help at an early stage.

Early Help is a collaborative approach which seeks to provide support as soon as a need is identified and before problems escalate.

Concerns may relate to:

- family circumstances;
- emotional wellbeing;
- mental health;
- attendance;
- behaviour;
- parenting difficulties;

- domestic abuse;
- financial hardship;
- housing difficulties;
- caring responsibilities;
- additional needs;
- exploitation or other safeguarding concerns.

Where appropriate, the school will work with the child, family and relevant agencies to provide or coordinate support.

Early Help does not replace a safeguarding referral where a child is at risk of harm.

Current Doncaster arrangements should be followed.

 **CURRENT:** Early Help Hub 01302 734110.

14. CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School recognises that children can abuse other children.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- bullying;
- physical abuse;
- sexual violence;
- sexual harassment;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- online abuse;
- sharing intimate images;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;
- discriminatory abuse;
- initiation or hazing-type behaviour;
- exploitation.

We will not dismiss harmful behaviour as "just banter", "part of growing up" or "children being children".

Concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with under safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

The school will consider the needs of both the child who has experienced harm and the child whose behaviour has caused concern.

Concerns which occur outside school or online may still require a school safeguarding response.

15. SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The school will respond promptly to any report or concern involving sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Staff will:

- listen carefully;
- report concerns immediately;
- avoid making assumptions;
- protect confidentiality appropriately;
- consider the safety of all pupils involved;
- seek advice from the DSL;
- make referrals where necessary.

The school will maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

16. CHILD EXPLOITATION

The school recognises child exploitation as a safeguarding concern.

This may include:

- child sexual exploitation;
- child criminal exploitation;
- county lines;
- trafficking;
- exploitation through online activity;
- exploitation by adults or peers;
- exploitation through gangs or organised groups.

Children may not recognise themselves as victims and may appear to have willingly participated.

Staff will be alert to changes in:

- behaviour;
- friendships;
- attendance;
- possessions;
- use of technology;
- money;
- emotional wellbeing;
- relationships;
- unexplained injuries;
- secrecy;
- travel or missing episodes.

Any concern will be reported to the DSL.

The DSL will follow current Doncaster procedures and seek advice from Children's Social Care and/or the police where appropriate.

17. TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY

The school recognises that children may be victims of trafficking, slavery, servitude or forced labour.

Children may be trafficked into, within or out of the UK.

Possible indicators may include:

- unexplained absence;
- missing episodes;
- unexplained injuries;
- fearfulness;
- unusual relationships with adults;
- lack of freedom;
- control by another person;
- unexplained possessions or money;
- changes in behaviour;
- reluctance to speak.

Any concern will be reported immediately to the DSL.

Where a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care and/or the police as appropriate.

18. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School recognises that children who are absent from education may be at increased risk of safeguarding concerns.

Absence may indicate:

- neglect;
- abuse;
- exploitation;
- family difficulties;
- mental health difficulties;
- bullying;
- unmet additional needs;
- forced marriage;
- trafficking;
- other safeguarding concerns.

The school will follow its Attendance Policy and current local authority procedures.

Where required, the school will notify the local authority of children who meet the relevant criteria for Children Missing from Education.

19. CHILDREN IN CARE AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School recognises that children in care and previously looked-after children may have experienced trauma, loss, abuse or neglect.

The school will:

- provide appropriate support;
- work with the child's social worker and carers;
- promote educational achievement;
- consider the child's individual needs;
- maintain high expectations;
- support emotional wellbeing;
- ensure relevant staff understand the child's circumstances.

The school will have a Designated Teacher for children in care and previously looked-after children.

20. DANGEROUS DOGS

The school recognises that dogs can present safeguarding risks to children.

Where staff become aware of a dog that may pose a risk to a child, the concern will be reported to the DSCP.

Where appropriate, advice will be sought from the police and/or Children's Social Care.

Where a child has been injured by a dog, or there is a significant safeguarding concern relating to a dog, the DSL will consider whether a referral is required.

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/Documents/DocumentView/Stream/Media/Default/ChildrenYoungPeopleFamilies/1%20minute%20guide%20-%20dangerous%20dogs-1.pdf>

21. DOMESTIC ABUSE

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School recognises that domestic abuse can have a serious and lasting impact on children.

Children may experience harm through:

- witnessing domestic abuse;
- hearing abuse;
- living with fear and intimidation;
- being used as part of controlling behaviour;
- experiencing direct physical or emotional abuse;
- being isolated from family or friends.

Domestic abuse can involve physical, emotional, psychological, sexual or financial abuse and coercive or controlling behaviour.

Staff should be alert to:

- changes in behaviour;
- anxiety;
- withdrawal;
- aggression;
- poor attendance;
- tiredness;
- difficulties concentrating;
- injuries;
- changes in family circumstances.

Where a child may be at risk of harm, the concern will be referred to the DSL and appropriate external agencies.

The school will work with relevant agencies and support children and families affected by domestic abuse.

22. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

The school recognises that parents have a right, subject to the law, to educate their children at home.

Where a child leaves school for elective home education, the school will follow current statutory guidance and local authority procedures.

The school will consider safeguarding concerns where relevant and will make a referral to Children's Social Care where there is reason to believe a child is suffering or is at risk of significant harm.

23. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in the UK and is a serious form of child abuse.

Teachers are subject to the statutory mandatory reporting duty where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

This duty does not replace the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Any concern about FGM will be reported to the DSL immediately and appropriate safeguarding action will be taken.

Staff will receive appropriate FGM awareness training.

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/crime-anti-social-behaviour-nuisance/information-for-professionals-female-genital-mutilation>

24. BREAST IRONING / BREAST FLATTENING

The school recognises breast ironing or breast flattening as a harmful practice which may constitute child abuse.

Any concern that a child may be at risk will be reported to the DSL and appropriate safeguarding procedures will be followed.

<https://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/breast-ironing-flattening/>

25. FORCED MARRIAGE

A forced marriage is one in which one or both people do not consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them to marry.

Pressure may be:

- physical;
- psychological;
- emotional;
- financial;
- sexual.

Children and young people may be particularly vulnerable.

Any concern about forced marriage will be treated as a safeguarding matter and referred immediately to the DSL.

The school will not approach family members or attempt to mediate where doing so could place the child at greater risk.

<https://doncasterscp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/forced-marriage?search=forced%20marriage>

26. HONOUR-BASED ABUSE

The school recognises honour-based abuse as a safeguarding concern.

Honour-based abuse may include:

- violence;
- threats;
- coercion;
- forced marriage;
- FGM;
- restrictions on movement;
- controlling behaviour;
- emotional abuse.

Any concern or disclosure will be taken seriously.

Staff must report concerns to the DSL and must not attempt to investigate or mediate with family members.

27. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND OTHER ADULTS

The school will follow the relevant procedures where an allegation or concern is made about an adult working with children.

This includes where an adult:

- has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- may have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm;
- has behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Concerns may also relate to behaviour outside the workplace where this raises questions about the individual's suitability to work with children.

The school will seek advice from the LADO where appropriate.

The school will not undertake its own investigation before seeking appropriate advice where an allegation may meet the LADO threshold.

Current Doncaster LADO contact:

01302 737332

LADO@doncaster.gov.uk

28. LGBTQ+ SAFEGUARDING

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School is committed to ensuring that every child is treated with dignity and respect and is protected from bullying, harassment and abuse.

A child's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation must never be used as a reason to tolerate bullying or harmful behaviour.

Staff should remain alert to children who may be vulnerable to bullying, isolation, abuse or other safeguarding concerns.

Where a child raises concerns about relationships, identity, bullying or their emotional wellbeing, staff will listen and respond appropriately within the school's safeguarding framework.

The school will work in partnership with parents and appropriate professional services.

IMPORTANT: This section should be read alongside the school's current Equality Policy and RSE/Health Education Policy.

29. ONLINE SAFETY

Online safety is an integral part of safeguarding at Sycamore Hall Preparatory School.

The school recognises that children may experience harm online through:

- social media;
- gaming;
- messaging;
- inappropriate content;
- online bullying;
- grooming;
- exploitation;
- extremist material;
- sexual harassment;
- sharing of images;
- scams and fraud;
- contact with unknown adults;
- harmful or illegal material;
- generative artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies.

The school will maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring systems.

The DSL and relevant senior leaders will understand the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements.

The school will:

- identify roles and responsibilities;
- review filtering and monitoring arrangements at least annually;
- respond promptly to safeguarding alerts;
- ensure staff understand how filtering and monitoring works;
- ensure online safety concerns are recorded and acted upon;
- provide appropriate online safety education to pupils.

The DfE's filtering and monitoring standard was updated in September 2026 and includes consideration of generative AI risks.

● **CURRENT OFFICIAL LINK:**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-core-standard>

30. PREVENT

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School recognises its responsibilities under the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty requires specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

The current Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales came into force on 31 December 2023 and replaced the 2015 guidance.

The school will:

- maintain an appropriate Prevent risk assessment;
- provide appropriate staff training;
- recognise signs that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation;
- respond appropriately to concerns;
- work with relevant agencies;
- maintain a safe and respectful environment;
- promote critical thinking and respectful discussion;
- manage visitors and external speakers appropriately;
- consider online radicalisation risks.

Concerns should be reported to the DSL.

The school will follow its separate Prevent Policy.

● **CURRENT OFFICIAL LINK:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

● **CURRENT OFFICIAL TRAINING:**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-duty-training>

31. PRIVATE FOSTERING

A private fostering arrangement may arise where a child under 16, or under 18 if disabled, is cared for by someone who is not a parent or close relative for more than 28 days.

Staff must be alert to children who appear to be living with adults other than their parents or close relatives for an extended period.

Any concerns should be reported to the DSL.

The school will encourage parents and carers to notify the local authority of relevant arrangements and will follow current Doncaster procedures.

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/children-s-services-delivering-social-care-and-safeguarding-to-children-young-people-and-families>

32. SUICIDE PREVENTION AND SELF-HARM

The school recognises that concerns about a child's mental health can also become safeguarding concerns.

Staff should report concerns where a child:

- expresses suicidal thoughts;
- talks about self-harm;
- appears to be at immediate risk;
- displays significant changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing;
- presents with injuries that may indicate self-harm.

The school will follow its Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and safeguarding procedures.

Where a child is at immediate risk, emergency medical or police assistance will be sought.

33. SUPPORTING CHILDREN AT RISK

The school recognises that safeguarding concerns may affect children's mental and physical health.

Staff will consider whether a mental health concern may indicate that a child is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, abuse, neglect or another safeguarding concern.

The school will also recognise that children with SEND may face additional barriers to recognising, reporting or responding to abuse.

Staff will avoid assuming that a behaviour, mood or injury is solely related to a child's SEND.

Additional attention will be given to:

- communication difficulties;
 - social isolation;
 - bullying;
 - dependency on adults;
 - barriers to disclosure;
 - behavioural changes;
 - online risks.
-

34. USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School recognises that there may be circumstances in which staff need to use reasonable force to prevent injury, protect a child or others, or maintain safety.

Reasonable force means using no more force than is necessary and proportionate in the circumstances.

The school will:

- use physical intervention only where necessary;
- use the least restrictive option available;

- ensure staff understand the school's Behaviour Policy;
- record incidents;
- inform parents/carers as appropriate;
- consider the additional vulnerability of children with SEND, medical conditions or mental health difficulties.

35. WHISTLEBLOWING

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about unsafe or poor safeguarding practice. Staff should normally raise concerns through the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise a concern internally, or believes that a concern has not been addressed appropriately, external routes may be available.

These may include:

- the LADO;
- Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership;
- Children's Social Care;
- the police;
- Ofsted where appropriate;
- the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

If a concern relates to the Headteacher, the school's nominated alternative person should be contacted.

36. YOUNG CARERS

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School recognises that some children may have regular caring responsibilities for a family member.

Young caring responsibilities can affect:

- emotional wellbeing;
- attendance;
- concentration;
- educational achievement;
- friendships;
- physical health;
- opportunities and life chances.

Staff should be alert to children who may be young carers and discuss concerns with the DSL.

The school will work with appropriate services to support children and families.

37. RECORD KEEPING

Safeguarding records must be:

- accurate;
- factual;
- dated;
- signed or attributable to the person making the record;
- stored securely;
- shared only with those who need to know.

Records should clearly identify:

- the concern;

- what the child said or what was observed;
- action taken;
- who was contacted;
- decisions made;
- the reasons for decisions;
- any outcome or follow-up action.

Safeguarding records must be kept separately from ordinary pupil records where appropriate and handled in accordance with the school's data protection procedures.

38. SAFER RECRUITMENT

The school will follow current safer recruitment requirements.

This includes:

- appropriate pre-employment checks;
- identity checks;
- right to work checks;
- qualification checks where required;
- references;
- Disclosure and Barring Service checks;
- appropriate checks relating to overseas applicants;
- consideration of information obtained through recruitment processes.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed that the school may undertake online searches as part of its pre-employment safeguarding checks.

39. TRAINING

All staff will receive safeguarding training:

- at induction;
- regularly thereafter;
- whenever significant changes to safeguarding procedures occur;
- through safeguarding updates during the academic year.

Training will cover, as appropriate:

- child protection;
- abuse and neglect;
- child-on-child abuse;
- online safety;
- exploitation;
- Prevent;
- FGM;
- domestic abuse;
- mental health;
- SEND safeguarding;
- safer recruitment for relevant staff;
- information sharing;
- allegations against adults.

All staff must read Part One of KCSIE 2026 in full.

The DSL and DDSL will undertake appropriate DSL training and regular updates.

40. CHILDREN WITH A SOCIAL WORKER

The school recognises that children who have or have had a social worker may have experienced significant challenges.

The DSL will ensure that appropriate information is shared with relevant staff so that the school can support the child's welfare, attendance, engagement and educational achievement.

The school will maintain high aspirations for these pupils and will consider whether additional support or reasonable adjustments are required.

41. ATTENDANCE AND SAFEGUARDING

Attendance is an important safeguarding issue.

Staff will be alert to:

- unexplained absence;
- repeated absence;
- changes in attendance;
- children missing from education;
- children missing from school without explanation;
- patterns of absence associated with particular days or circumstances.

Attendance concerns will be followed up promptly in accordance with the Attendance Policy.

Where attendance concerns indicate possible safeguarding risks, the DSL will be informed.

42. SAFEGUARDING DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

The DSL and DDSL will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for safeguarding concerns arising during school holidays.

Where necessary, concerns will be referred directly to Children's Social Care or the police rather than waiting for the school to reopen.

43. WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The school recognises that parents and carers are important partners in safeguarding.

We will seek to:

- communicate openly where it is safe and appropriate;
- involve parents and carers in supporting children;
- explain safeguarding procedures;
- provide appropriate information about support services;
- work collaboratively with families.

However, there may be circumstances where sharing information with parents or carers could place a child at greater risk. In such circumstances, the DSL will seek appropriate professional advice before information is shared.

44. WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The school recognises that safeguarding is a multi-agency responsibility.

We will cooperate with:

- Children's Social Care;
- Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership;
- South Yorkshire Police;

- health services;
- CAMHS;
- Early Help;
- the LADO;
- the Virtual School;
- the local authority;
- other relevant agencies.

Working Together 2026 places particular emphasis on effective multi-agency safeguarding, robust assessment and appropriate information sharing.

45. SAFEGUARDING CULTURE

Sycamore Hall Preparatory School is committed to creating a culture in which:

- children feel safe;
- children know who they can talk to;
- staff feel confident to report concerns;
- safeguarding is discussed openly and appropriately;
- concerns are acted upon promptly;
- children are treated with dignity and respect;
- staff maintain professional boundaries;
- safeguarding remains central to school life.

We will continue to promote the principle that **safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**.

46. POLICY REVIEW

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where required by:

- changes to legislation;
- changes to statutory guidance;
- changes to local safeguarding procedures;
- safeguarding incidents or lessons learned;
- changes to school arrangements;
- recommendations from inspections or safeguarding reviews.

The school will refer to the latest DfE guidance when reviewing statutory policies.

● **CURRENT OFFICIAL LINK:** KCSIE 2026

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

● **CURRENT OFFICIAL LINK:** Working Together 2026

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

● **CURRENT LOCAL LINK:** Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership

<https://dscp.org.uk/>
