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Safeguarding Children and Young Person's Policy

PAZPOL002v1

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Version	Action	Author / Reviewer	Verifier	Comments	Last Review
v2.0	New	Ian Brough	Safaraz Ali	Newly Revised	19/08/2026

Review

This policy will be regularly monitored to ensure that the objectives are achieved. In addition to the annual review cycle for this policy, this policy will also be reviewed and where necessary revised in the event of legislative or organisational changes.

Next Review Date

August 2027

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1. Policy Principles

Pathway AcademyZone, (the Organisation), believes that safeguarding is the cornerstone of effective education and care.

We are committed to ensuring that every Child and Young Person (CYP) in our care is protected from harm and can learn and develop in a safe, inclusive environment.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every member of staff, regardless of role, shares a duty to promote welfare, prevent abuse, and respond to concerns with professionalism and integrity.

The Organisation adheres to the principle that the welfare of the child is paramount, as set out in the ***Children Act 1989***.

2. Policy Aims

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that all staff and volunteers:

- Understand their safeguarding responsibilities and act without delay when concerns arise;
- Recognise and respond appropriately to signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation;
- Maintain a culture of vigilance and openness;
- Work collaboratively with parents, carers, and external agencies to safeguard CYP;
- Embed safeguarding across all areas of the Organisation's work, curriculum, and ethos.

3. Values

The Organisation's safeguarding approach is guided by the following values:

- **Respect:** Every CYP deserves to be treated with dignity and listened to without judgment.

- **Inclusion:** We embrace diversity and ensure that all CYP, regardless of background or ability, are protected and supported.
- **Integrity:** Staff act honestly, ethically, and transparently in safeguarding matters.
- **Empowerment:** CYP are supported to understand their rights, make safe choices, and speak up when they feel unsafe.

4. Safe Company, Safe Staff

The Organisation promotes a “safe company” culture where safety, wellbeing, and trust are prioritised.

We ensure that:

- All recruitment and selection processes follow Safer Recruitment principles;
- Enhanced DBS checks are completed for all staff and volunteers;
- Staff receive regular supervision, safeguarding training, and guidance on professional conduct;
- Risk assessments are completed for all activities, environments, and individuals as appropriate;
- Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to reflect current legislation and best practice.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- Designated Safeguarding Lead DSL and Head of AP – Ian Brough
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Deputy DSL – Haleem Majahid

All staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard CYP by identifying concerns, recording information accurately, and reporting immediately to the DSL.

The Head of AP ensures effective implementation and monitoring of safeguarding procedures.

6. Confidentiality

Information about safeguarding concerns is shared on a “need-to-know” basis only. All staff are expected to respect confidentiality but understand that the duty to safeguard overrides data protection when a child's welfare is at risk.

The Organisation complies with the **Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR**, and local safeguarding partnership guidance when handling personal information.

7. Child Protection Procedures

When staff suspect abuse or a CYP discloses harm:

- They must listen carefully and record the information accurately using the Organisation's safeguarding report form.
- The concern must be reported immediately to the DSL, (or DDSL).
- The DSL will decide whether to manage internally, refer to Children's Social Care, or contact Police for immediate risk.

Referrals are made within 24 hours of a concern arising. All safeguarding actions are logged chronologically and securely.

8. Children Who Are Particularly Vulnerable

Some CYP face greater risks due to their circumstances, including those who:

- Have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND);
- Are looked-after or care leavers;
- Are young carers;
- Have experienced trauma, neglect, or abuse;
- Identify as LGBTQ+;
- Are from minority ethnic groups or asylum-seeking backgrounds;
- Are persistently absent or missing from education.

- Staff give additional consideration to these CYP to ensure appropriate support and early intervention.

9. Anti-Bullying / Cyberbullying

The Organisation has ***Zero Tolerance for bullying, harassment, or discrimination***. Staff actively promote kindness, respect, and inclusion.

Cyberbullying is treated with the same seriousness as in-person bullying. CYP are supported to use technology responsibly and to report any online harm immediately.

10. Racist Incidents

Any incident of racism, hate speech, or discriminatory behaviour is unacceptable and will be dealt with promptly and robustly.

Such incidents are recorded, reported, and addressed through education, restorative work, and, where necessary, disciplinary action.

11. Radicalisation and Extremism

Under the ***Prevent Duty (2015, updated 2023)***, the Organisation has a responsibility to protect CYP from radicalisation.

Staff are trained to identify signs of extremist influence and refer concerns to the DSL, who may liaise with the Channel Programme.

The Organisation promotes British values — democracy, rule of law, respect, and tolerance — through the curriculum and community engagement.

12. Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse includes physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and financial control between family members or partners. Exposure to domestic abuse can cause lasting trauma.

Staff remain alert to signs such as anxiety, withdrawal, aggression, or unexplained absences and refer concerns through safeguarding procedures.

13. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE involves the sexual exploitation of CYP for gain, gratification, or status. It can occur online or in person. Staff look for indicators such as sudden changes in appearance, secrecy, gifts, or contact with older individuals.

The Organisation works closely with social care and police to protect victims and prevent further exploitation.

FGM is a criminal offence and a form of child abuse. Staff have a mandatory reporting duty to inform the police if they discover that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18.

The Organisation ensures that staff are trained to recognise risk indicators and to respond with sensitivity and urgency.

14. Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities cannot) consent to the marriage but are coerced into it.

Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Forced marriage is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse, and a serious abuse of human rights. Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the ***Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014***.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures. The families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Staff should never attempt to intervene directly or through a third party. Contact should be made with the contact centre or the ***Forced Marriage Unit 020 7008 0151***.

15. Honour-Based Violence

Honour-based violence encompasses crimes committed to protect perceived "honour" of a family or community.

It may involve physical violence, coercion, or abuse.

Staff must treat any suspicion of honour-based abuse as a safeguarding emergency and report it immediately.

16. One Chance Rule

When dealing with forced marriage, FGM, or honour-based abuse, staff must apply the **One Chance Rule** — assuming that they may only have one opportunity to save a child or young person from harm. ***Immediate referral to the DSL and safeguarding partners is essential.***

17. Running Away / Missing

CYP who go missing from education or home are at significant risk of exploitation, trafficking, and harm.

The Organisation records all absences, contacts parents promptly, and follows local Children Missing Education (CME) protocols.

18. Online and e-Safety

The Organisation promotes safe use of technology through education, monitoring, and secure filtering systems.

Staff model responsible digital behaviour, and CYP are encouraged to report online concerns, including exposure to inappropriate content, contact from strangers, or cyberbullying.

19. Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Abuse between CYP, including sexual harassment, violence, or coercive behaviour, is never tolerated or dismissed as “banter.”

All incidents are recorded and addressed in line with safeguarding procedures, with support provided for both victims and those who cause harm.

20. Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting)

Creating or sharing sexual images of under-18s, even consensually, is a criminal offence.

Staff must report all incidents to the DSL.

The Organisation follows **UKCIS Sexting Guidance (2020)** to manage cases sensitively, while ensuring legal compliance and child protection.

21. Allegations Against Staff

Any allegation that a staff member or volunteer has harmed a child, or behaved inappropriately, must be reported to the DSL and Head of AP immediately.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted within one working day for all relevant cases using Northamptonshire LADO procedures and contacts.

The Organisation ensures fairness, transparency, and confidentiality throughout investigations.

22. Whistleblowing

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns about poor practice or misconduct without fear of reprisal.

Concerns can be raised with the Head of AP, DSL, DDSL, Chair of Governors, or externally with the **LADO** or **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline (0800 028 0285)**.

23. Physical Intervention

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. (Please refer to Physical Intervention Policy. Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.

Physical intervention is used only when absolutely necessary to prevent harm, damage, or injury, and always in accordance with **DfE guidance "Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (2013)"**.

All incidents must be recorded and reviewed by management, with debriefs for both staff and CYP involved.

24. Evaluation, Governance and Monitoring

- Governance Board of Pathway AcademyZone.

Regular audits, case reviews, and incident analyses inform continuous improvement.

Safeguarding reports are shared with leadership to ensure accountability and oversight.

25. References

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Prevent Duty Guidance (2023)
- UKCIS Guidance on Sexting (2020)
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR
- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Procedures

26. Training

All staff receive safeguarding training upon induction and annual updates thereafter.

Training includes Recognising abuse, Prevent Duty, Safer Working Practice, Mental Health Awareness, Mental Health Act 2005 including DoLS, and managing disclosures.

The DSL and deputies receive advanced multi-agency safeguarding training every two years and attend local DSL networks. Supervision and refresher workshops ensure ongoing professional competence.

All staff will be encouraged to read this Policy as part of their Induction Process and a record of Induction and on-going awareness on their obligation to comply with the Safeguarding Children and Young Person's Policy, will be kept in the staff personal files.

27. Non-Compliance

Failure to adhere to our organisation's Policies and Procedures is a serious matter and in some situations may result in disciplinary action and ultimate dismissal, as per our Disciplinary and Grievance Policies and Procedures.

28. Approval

This Policy has been approved by the undersigned and will be reviewed at least annually.

Name:	Safaraz Ali
Signature:	Safaraz Ali
Approval Date:	August 2026
Next Review Date:	August 2027
Document Control Number	PAZPOL002v1

Emergency: If a child is in immediate danger call 999.

LADO Business Support: Lisa Austin 07884 615005 | Adebola Attah 07386 690052 | Beth Panter 07522 631597

LADO Officers: Andy Smith 07850 854309 | Sian Edwards 07738 636449 | Francesca Hamilton 07712 718701

LADO Email: LADOConsultations@NCTrust.co.uk

Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours): 0300 126 7000

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub): 0300 126 7000 (North and West Northamptonshire)

NSCP General Enquiries: NSCP@NorthNorthants.gov.uk

Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) Office Hours: Mon-Fri 09:00-17:00

Danesholme Community Centre, 4 Danesholme Square, Corby, NN18 9EJ

Appendix: Local Safeguarding Contacts

Appendix 1: Recognising Signs of Child Abuse

Categories of Abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse)
- Sexual Abuse (including child sexual exploitation)
- Neglect

Signs of Abuse in Children

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour;
- Extreme anger or sadness;
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour;
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations;
- Lack of self-esteem;

- Self-injury;
- Depression;
- Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- Child Sexual Exploitation;

Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm;
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague);
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services.

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred. In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses;
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child;
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment);
- Be absent or misusing substances;
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits;
- Be involved in domestic abuse.

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a "cry for help" and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

Bruising

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence, or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby;
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding;
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive);
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally;
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times;
- The outline of an object used e.g., belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush;
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting;
- Bruising around the face;

- Grasp marks on small children;
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse.

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.

A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine);
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements;
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area;
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks);
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation.

Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.

There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent, or inconsistent with the fracture type;
- There are associated old fractures;

- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement;
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life.

Scars

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse.

The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay;
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g., anxious, indiscriminate, or not attachment;
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach;
- Aggressive behaviour towards others;
- Scapegoated within the family;
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children;
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence;
- Withdrawn or seen as a "loner" – difficulty relating to others.

Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about, and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct;
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age;
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation;
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts;
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners;
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g., for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties).

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area;
- Blood on underclothes;
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed;
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia, or clothing.

Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g., adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, and medical care;
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic, and irresponsible with no apparent medical cause;
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss;
- Child thrives away from home environment;
- Child frequently absent from school;

- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent;
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods.