



Child Protection/safeguarding Policy

2025 to 2026

Thomas Hall School

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Centre name	Thomas Hall School
Centre number	54214
Date policy first created	02/11/2023
Current policy approved by	Phil Arnold
Current policy reviewed by	Michelle Spiess
Date of next review	01/09/2026

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Head of centre	Phil Arnold
Senior leader(s)	Phil Arnold, Helen Towler-Williams, Charlotte Webster, Joe Medland
Exams officer	Michelle Spiess
ALS lead/SENCo	Charlotte Webster, Joe Medland
Other staff (if applicable)	George Housden

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that access arrangements process at Thomas Hall School is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

Key contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (including EYFS provision)	Email: Helen Towler-Williams@thomashallschool.org Telephone number (term time): 01392 757371
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Email:george.housden@thomashallschool.org Telephone (term time): 01392 757371 Mobile number (term time): 07483 341871
Headteacher	Email: phil.arnold@thomashallschool.org Telephone number: 01392 757371

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- to actively promote the well-being of pupils;
- to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, staff and others who come into contact with the Academy and to protect them from harm;
- to have clear procedures in place for dealing with and referring concerns about the welfare of any individual and / or allegations of abuse, neglect and / or exploitation;
- to raise awareness about how to report concerns and how they will be investigated, whether they are current or historic in nature;
- to raise staff awareness about the Academy's safeguarding expectations;
- to ensure staff are competent to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities and feel supported in this role;
- to ensure consistent good safeguarding practice throughout the Academy to include the promotion of a zero tolerance approach to child-on-child sexual violence and harassment in which pupils are confident to report it and staff are confident to identify and respond to it; and
- to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality, and protection.

Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse and neglect.

All staff should understand the indicators of abuse and neglect and specific safeguarding risks so that they can identify them and report any concerns about children.

Members of the Academy community (to include alumni) should also feel able to raise any safeguarding concerns, whether current or non-recent, safe in the knowledge that they will be supported, the matter will be handled sensitively, and appropriate action taken.

Anyone about whom a concern is raised should feel confident that they will be supported, and the matter will be handled sensitively, and that appropriate action will be taken.

Scope and application

This policy applies to the whole Academy, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (**EYFS**).

This policy applies at all times including where pupils or staff are away from the Academy, whether they are on school-arranged activities or otherwise, and whether or not the Academy is open. It will therefore apply out of school hours and in the holidays.

This policy applies to core Academy activities, and to out of hours, and commercial activities.

Specific safeguarding duties in relation to children

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility.

The school is committed to acting in the best interests of the child so as to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The school requires everyone who comes into contact with children and their families to share this commitment.

The school will:

- (a) understand its role in the safeguarding partner arrangements [Child protection - What to do if you're worried about a child's safety? (devon.gov.uk)] and operate safeguarding procedures in line with locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements put in place by the Devon County Safeguarding Partners;
- (b) be alert to signs of abuse whether in school, within the child's family or from outside, and take steps to protect individuals from any form of abuse or neglect, whether from an adult or another child;
- (c) include opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise, and stay safe from abuse;
- (d) promote the systems in place for children to confidentially report abuse, ensuring they know their concerns will be treated seriously, they can safely express their views and give feedback;
- (e) take active steps to promote school attendance;
- (f) allow staff to determine how best to build trusted relationships with pupils which facilitate communication within the parameters of the staff Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy;
- (g) deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse and support children who have been abused in accordance with appropriate education, child protection and / or welfare plans;
- (h) design and operate procedures which, so far as possible, ensure that staff, pupils and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by malicious, false, unsubstantiated or unfounded allegations;
- (i) prepare staff to identify children who may benefit from early help and encourage them to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for children with the indicators listed in KCSIE or WTSC;
- (j) be alert to children who are at potentially greater risk of harm (both online and offline) including children who need a social worker and children requiring mental health support;
- (k) be alert to the needs of pupils with physical or mental health conditions, special educational needs or disabilities, which could be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation, and where additional barriers can exist when detecting abuse or neglect;

- (l) encourage a culture of listening to pupils and victims of abuse and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measure put in place and actions taken by the Academy to protect them;
- (m) operate robust and sensible health and safety procedures and operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance misuse;
- (n) assess the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, based on an understanding of the potential risk in the local area;
- (o) identify pupils who may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified; and
- (p) consider and develop procedures to deal with any other safeguarding issues which may be specific to individual pupils in the Academy or in the local area.

Staff may follow the school's whistleblowing policy to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices at the Academy or potential failures by the Academy or its staff to properly fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities. Such concerns will be taken seriously. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns about child protection failures internally (see the front of this policy for the relevant contact details). Staff may also report concerns direct to the Academy's Local Authority or to the ESFA if they consider that the Academy has failed to deal with concerns appropriately.

[Safer recruitment and supervision of staff](#)

The school is committed to practising safer recruitment, which includes carrying out pre-appointment checks to determine that staff (including those employed by another organisation) are suitable to work with or around children, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance, which satisfies current legislative requirements;

The Proprietor maintains a single central register of appointments for all staff.

Staff connected to the Academy's early years and later years provisions are under an ongoing duty to inform the school if their circumstances change which would mean they meet any of the criteria for disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006.

The school's protocol for ensuring that visiting speakers are suitable and appropriately supervised is set out in the Academy's separate Visitors Policy.

Teaching pupils about safeguarding

- (a) The Academy teaches pupils about safeguarding through the curriculum and PSHE. This includes guidance on adjusting behaviour to reduce risks, particularly online, building resilience to protect themselves and their peers, fostering healthy and respectful relationships with others and providing information about who they should turn to for help.
- (b) The Academy recognises that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.
- (c) Pupils are taught about harmful sexual behaviours, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, through relationships and sex education and PSHE education appropriate to their age and stage of development. It will tackle issues such as; healthy and respectful relationships, boundaries and consent, stereotyping, prejudice and equality, body confidence and self-esteem, how to recognise abusive relationships, including coercive and controlling behaviour, concepts and laws

relating to sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called "honourbased" violence and how to access support, what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

- (d) Pupils are given the opportunity to talk about safeguarding issues within the classroom environment and are made aware of the processes by which any concerns they have can be raised, including the processes for reporting a concern about a friend or peer, and how any report will be handled.
- (e) The safe use of technology is a focus in all areas of the curriculum and key ICT safety messages are reinforced as part of assemblies and tutorial / pastoral activities so that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe on-line and when accessing remote learning. The Academy has ensured appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and meet the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards (see the Online safety policy) and is mindful that this should not lead to unnecessary restrictions on learning.
- (f) The Academy keeps in regular contact with parents and carers to reinforce the importance of pupils being safe online and make them aware of the systems in place to filter and monitor online use and the sites pupils will be expected to access during learning.

Monitoring and review

The DSL will ensure that the procedures set out in this policy and the implementation of these procedures are updated and reviewed regularly, working with the Governing Body as necessary and seeking contributions from staff. The DSL will update the Senior Management Team regularly on the operation of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Any safeguarding incidents at the school will be followed by a review of these procedures by the DSL and a report made to the Governing Body. Where an incident involves a member of staff, the Designated Officer(s) will be asked to assist in this review to determine whether any improvements can be made to the Academy's procedures. Any deficiencies or weaknesses with regards to safeguarding arrangements at any time will be remedied without delay.

This policy will be updated whenever needed to ensure that it remains up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including in relation to lessons learnt.

The Board of Trustees will also undertake an annual review of this policy and the Academy's safeguarding procedures, including an update and review of the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation and the effectiveness of interagency working. It will also undertake an annual review of its approach to online safety and filtering and monitoring provision, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks its pupils face.

The Board of Trustees will review this policy and the implementation of its procedures and consider the proposed amendments to the policy before giving the revised policy its final approval.

Record keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded. This will also help if / when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the Academy. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely on CPOMS. These should include: a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern; details of how the concern was followed up and resolved; and a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The Academy's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The Academy has published on its website privacy notices which explain how the Academy will use personal data. All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the Academy's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

As far as pupil records are concerned:

- Staff must record all concerns about a pupil on the school's CPOMS system.
- The DSL will record all discussions with both colleagues and external agencies, decisions made and the reasons for them and detail of the action taken.

Information sharing and multi-agency working

- The school will treat all safeguarding information with an appropriate level of confidentiality, only involving others where appropriate. The Academy will always act in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of others.
- The school understands that information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, including their educational outcomes. Fears about sharing information will not stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of pupils, which is always the school's paramount concern. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes and the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 provide a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately.
- When the school receives a request for safeguarding information (e.g. a subject access request from a parent or a request from the police), the Academy will carefully consider its response to make sure that any disclosure is in accordance with its obligations under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. The Academy will also have regard to its data protection policies. The Academy's Data Protection Lead will work with the DSL as appropriate to determine what should be disclosed.
- The school will co-operate with children's social care, and where appropriate the police, to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of early help assessments, and assessments and child protection investigations under the Children Act 1989.
- Where allegations have been made against staff, the Academy will consult with the Designated Officer(s) and, where appropriate, the police and children's social care to agree the information that should be disclosed and to whom.
- While the school will share information with those involved where and when it is appropriate to do so, they may be unable to for reasons of data protection and confidentiality, for example because to do so may pose a risk of harm to others or because it has been prohibited by external agencies.


