

Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT Safeguarding Statement

Utilising KCSIE 2024¹ and relevant government documentation.

Our Lady of Lourdes Mission Statement:

We are a partnership of Catholic schools.

Our aim is to provide the very best Catholic education for all in our community and so improve life chances through spiritual, academic and social development.

By placing the person and teachings of Jesus Christ at the centre of all that we do, we will:

- Follow the example of Our Lady of Lourdes by nurturing everyone in a spirit of compassion, service and healing
- Work together so that we can all achieve our full potential, deepen our faith and realise our God-given talents
- Make the world a better place, especially for the most vulnerable in our society, by doing *'little things with great love'* St Thérèse of Lisieux

We believe everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 - Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges' (DfE September 2023) contains information on what schools, including academies, should do and sets out the legal duties with which they must comply. This statutory guidance should be read and followed by *'proprietors of independent schools (including academies, free schools and alternative provision academies) and non-maintained special schools. In the case of academies, free schools and alternative provision academies, the proprietor will be the academy trust'*.

The Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust is the proprietor as defined above and as such is responsible for ensuring that all staff in the CMAT academies read either Part one or Annex A (a condensed version of Part one) ***'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 - Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges' (DfE 2nd September 2024)***.

This legal requirement together with the Catholic values and principles that underpin the **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** mean that it is essential that the **CMAT** ensures not only compliance at local level but also assumes a strategic responsibility to ensure that safeguarding practices are robust and effective in safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all children and young people in its care.

¹ [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115271/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-2024.pdf)

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust as the proprietor and all our Local Governing Bodies are aware of our obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Local Authorities have overarching statutory responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. However, **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.**

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action. This is defined in our safeguarding and child protection policy, ensuring a culture of safeguarding in all that we do.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education - Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges' (DfE September 2024) defines Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- 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.

'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding also encompasses issues such as health and safety, bullying, and a range of other issues, for example, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children by providing first aid, academy security, drugs and substance misuse and positive behaviour. There may also be other safeguarding issues that are specific to the local area or population highlighted within the Safeguarding & Child Protection policy for each academy through Contextual Safeguarding areas of risk.

The **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** is wholly committed to ensuring that all children and young people are cared for in a safe, nurturing and secure environment in our academies.

To fulfil this commitment, we have robust systems in place for:

- Policy and procedures
- Safe recruitment of staff and volunteers
- CMAT responsibilities
- Training

Policy and procedure

Child Protection/Safeguarding policies must be reviewed and agreed on an annual basis to ensure that key messages from legislation and guidance are embedded within all of our academies. Policy and procedures are developed using *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2024) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (Dec 2023)² and other key Government guidance. The **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** will follow clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. There is a clear Whistleblowing policy in place.

Additional support and challenge is made to ensure that other safeguarding policies and procedures are effective such as E-Safety, Anti Bullying, Codes of Conduct, Pupil Behaviour and Attendance.

The **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** expects that each academy will follow the guidance and child protection procedures provided by their Local Safeguarding Children Board and Local Authority children's services departments.

Safe recruitment of staff and volunteers

Safer recruitment is an important part of safeguarding children and is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education.

The **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** sees it is vital that there is a culture of safe recruitment and has adopted recruitment procedures that will deter, reject and identify people who might be unsuitable to work with children and young people.

² [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115222/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2023-statutory-guidance.pdf)

All elements of our Safer Recruitment policy ensure that the recruitment and selection processes outlined:

- meet the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2nd September 2024) are robust.
- have relevant vetting and checking procedures.
- include a robust induction.
- provide an ongoing training infrastructure.

The policy outlines the steps that the **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** will take to ensure those employed in our academies are safe to work with children and young people and its main purpose is:

- to prevent unsuitable people working within our academies
- to attract the best possible candidates to work in our academies.
- to create and maintain a safe workforce.

The **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** will provide clear guidance, expectations, challenge, and support to all academies to maintain a single central record to provide reassurance that all staff and volunteers are recruited safely.

CMAT responsibilities

The **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** is committed to the following core safeguarding principles:

- A designated safeguarding lead and a designated governor for safeguarding
- The Trust's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
 - We recognise that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
 - We ensure extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.
- Children who are safe and feel safe are better equipped to learn.
- A culture of listening to children and take account of their wishes and feelings.

- The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, governors and directors to share this commitment.
- All staff, volunteers, governors and directors have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm at home, in the community or in an academy.
- Arrangements for working together with other agencies and for sharing information with other professionals.
- **If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral will be made to Children’s Social Care immediately.**
- All staff members will maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members are to always act in the interests of the child.
- Peer on peer/child on child abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment will be met with an immediate response by schools and supported by the Trust.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.
- Policies and procedures are in place for reporting allegations made against or concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers or contractors.
- Policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.
- Implement appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education.
- Fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Training

The **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** will ensure that academies comply with training requirements as defined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2nd September 2024):

- All school staff must undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. This training should be updated regularly. It should also be in line with advice from the local safeguarding children board (LSCB).
 - LSCP – Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
 - CMARS – Children’s resilience and safeguarding board (North Lincs).
 - NELSCB – North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

- NCSCB – Nottingham City Safeguarding Children’s Board.
- NSCP – Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- DSCB - Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Safeguarding training during induction should give staff an awareness of the school's safeguarding systems. Induction training should also cover:
 - The Safeguarding & Child Protection policy
 - The staff code of conduct (training should cover the school's whistle-blowing procedures)
 - The role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- The DSL and any deputy DSLs should undergo training that provides them with the knowledge and skills needed to perform the role. This training should be updated **every two years**.
- The DSL should undertake training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent. All staff, volunteers and governors receive PREVENT training.
- The knowledge and skills of the DSL and deputies should be updated ‘at regular intervals.’
- Safer recruitment training is completed for required staff, governors and directors.
- Our academies are additionally required to ensure all staff, volunteers and governors have opportunities to explore learning in relation to female genital mutilation, honour-based violence, other local and national priorities, managing allegations and E- Safety
- Consider how children may be taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping looked after children safe.

The Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust will also:

- Monitor the quality of safeguarding practices and their impact on outcomes for children across the CMAT and provide regular reports to the Chief Executive Officer and the CMAT Board of Directors.
- Work with local governing bodies to ensure that the performance of vulnerable children is effectively monitored and that appropriate support is made available to those children who are at risk of achieving poor outcomes because they are a Child in Need, subject to Child Protection plans or who are Looked After.
- Liaise with local authority lead professionals for safeguarding, Safeguarding Children’s Partnerships, Ofsted, Education and Skills Funding Agency and other agencies as required.

- Produce an annual safeguarding action plan as part of the CMAT's strategic business planning arrangements.
- Commission external challenge and support where appropriate to ensure academies meet their statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Policy in respect of safeguarding is determined primarily at national and local authority level and it is the responsibility of each academy to implement such policy. The **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** is committed to ensuring adherence to national and local policy in the interests of vulnerable children and young people. Failure to implement appropriate arrangements in academies to safeguard and promote the well-being of children carries significant reputational risk for the CMAT.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024); 'The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children' (paragraph 120).

*'DPA and UK GDPR **do not** prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.'* (paragraph 55).

'This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent.' (paragraph 118)

The **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust** named safeguarding contacts are:

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Date Issued	<i>September 2024</i>
Date of Review	<i>September 2025 (annually)</i>
Reviewer	<i>Standards Committee / OLoL Exec Board</i>
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