

THE HAVEN

Operated by the Autistic Girls Network charity — 1196655 (England and Wales), SC054837 (Scotland)

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Document	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Version	10.26
Status	live
Last reviewed	22 October 2026
Next review	29 April 2027
Owner	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Approved by	Proprietor

Approved Date: April 2026 (content revised August and October 2026; see version history)

Review Date: April 2027, and in any event each September when Keeping Children Safe in Education is reissued

Coordinator: the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Nominated Governor: the Safeguarding Governor

Version: 10.26

Version history

Version: Date | Summary of changes

| :---- | :---- | :---- | | 10.26 | April 2026 | Policy approved. | | 10.26 | August 2026 | Content revised. | | 10.26 | 20 October 2026 | Revised against Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (final edition, 1 September 2026) and the DfE Online Education Standards: training and annex references corrected; safer recruitment updated; shared DSL mailbox; new sections on mental health, young carers, prejudice-based harm, reduced timetables, serious violence, modern slavery, transfer of child protection files and informing parents; child-on-child abuse definition rewritten; Family Help terminology; external reporting routes; admission and attendance registers; Scotland and Wales frameworks. | | 10.26 | 22 October 2026 | Gap check against KCSIE 2026 and the Online Education Standards. Added: Prevent, FGM reporting duty, forced marriage and honour-based abuse, children missing education, looked-after and previously looked-after children, private fostering, children with a family member in custody; allegations and low-level concerns procedure, including concerns about the Head or Proprietor; DBS and TRA referrals; mobile phones; time and resources for the DSL and Deputy; confirmation of receipt for file transfers; register notifications; Appendix B. Settled: children questioning their gender; lesson recording (kept for one year); Monmouthshire entry. |

Statement of Intent

The Haven is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of every learner. As a flexible online learning ('hyflex') education provider, we recognise that safeguarding responsibilities apply across all digital spaces, including live online sessions, recorded lessons, chat functions, and communication platforms.

We adopt a whole-school preventative approach to safeguarding and child protection, ensuring robust systems are in place for learners, families, and staff across all virtual and digital environments. Part of that approach is an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture: prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice, misogyny, ableism and prejudice towards LGBT+ learners, is treated as a safeguarding matter and not as a behaviour issue alone.

This policy ensures:

- All stakeholders understand their safeguarding responsibilities under current UK legislation.
- Learners are taught to recognise and report unacceptable behaviour in both physical and online spaces.
- Staff are trained to identify learners at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and learners whose mental health places them at risk.
- Safer recruitment practices are embedded.
- A culture of openness, vigilance, and early intervention is fostered.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) role is held by the Head; the Deputy DSL (DDSL) role is held by the SENCo. Current postholders' contact details are shared with staff and families at induction, and the DSL team is always reachable at dsl@autisticgirlsnetwork.org. Both are trained to the same standard, as Keeping Children Safe in Education requires of a deputy, and both are given the time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role. They are available during core operating hours.

Clarification on Digital Environments and Application

This policy applies to all virtual learning environments and digital communication platforms used by The Haven, including learning management systems, video conferencing tools, chat channels, and secure storage spaces. All safeguarding expectations, responsibilities, and reporting procedures apply equally across all digital contexts.

Keeping Children Safe in Education applies in England. For learners living in Scotland, The Haven also has regard to the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland and the procedures of the relevant Child Protection Committee; for learners living in Wales, to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. Where this policy refers to the LADO, MASH or Family Help, the equivalent local route for the learner's home nation and authority is used (see Appendix A).

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Sexual Offences Act 2003

- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Crime and Policing Act 2026

Statutory guidance

- Home Office (2023) 'Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales'
- DfE (2026) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026' (published March 2026, replacing the 2023 edition)
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2023, updated August 2025) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people susceptible to radicalisation'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2022, updated August 2025) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage'

Non-statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'

- DfE (2024) 'Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2023) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- DfE (2023) 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2025) 'Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2022) 'Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance'

It is also aligned with:

- DfE guidance for remote education delivery: Providing remote education: guidance for schools (updated 2024)
- DfE Online Education Standards (Online Education Accreditation Scheme)
- Local safeguarding partner arrangements (by location of learner or provision)

Scope and platforms in use

The Haven delivers learning in **hyflex environments** (see definitions): live online lessons, occasional in-person activities, and asynchronous resources. The following platforms are in scope and governed by this policy and linked procedures: **Google Classroom** (core VLE), **Google Meet** (live sessions), **Google Workspace**, **TutorCruncher** (administration and the safeguarding record), and **email**.

No external community chat platforms are used for learner communication unless expressly authorised by the DSL and configured to Haven standards.

Definitions (key terms)

- **Hyflex environment:** Hybrid-flexible delivery where learners may attend live online, attend in person (where offered), or access recorded/asynchronous learning. Safeguarding duties apply continuously across all modes.
- **Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence):** Abuse by children towards other children, in person or online, including bullying; physical assault or threats, including with weapons; harmful sexual behaviour; sexual harassment and sexual violence; making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes; upskirting; initiation or hazing; and online abuse (group chats, DMs, file-sharing). See Types of abuse.
- **Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB):** Sexual behaviour by a child that is developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful to the child or others, or is abusive. It sits on a continuum from developmentally typical behaviour to sexual violence.
- **Anonymous reporting:** Routes that allow concerns to be raised without disclosing identity (see Managing disclosures and reporting).
- **LADO:** Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations about adults who work with children (England and Wales; in Scotland the equivalent route is through local social work child protection).
- **Low-level concern:** Any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working with or on behalf of The Haven may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the expectations of professional conduct,

including outside work, but that does not meet the harm threshold for an allegation (see Allegations and concerns about adults).

- **MASH/Front Door:** Local authority single point of contact for safeguarding referrals (children at risk of significant harm).
- **Family Help:** The targeted early help tier described in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, delivered through local Family Help services. Referral criteria are set locally.
- **DBS and TRA:** The Disclosure and Barring Service, which decides whether a person should be barred from working with children, and the Teaching Regulation Agency, which deals with serious teacher misconduct.

Types of abuse (what we watch for)

The Haven recognises categories of abuse, as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026):

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse, including persistent criticism and other verbal abuse
- Cyberbullying, online exclusion, and trauma linked to digital isolation.
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), including county lines involvement. CCE can be committed or facilitated by organised networks or gangs, and the child may be part of the group.
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), including online grooming or coercion.
- Sexual abuse: forcing or causing a child to take part in sexual activity, including contact and non-contact acts, grooming, or coercion, and including digital exploitation. A child under 13 cannot consent to any sexual activity.
- Neglect
- Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence): abuse by one learner towards another, in person or online, including bullying; physical assault or threats, including with weapons; harmful sexual behaviour, which includes misogyny and sexual harassment; sexual violence; making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes, including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated by AI, whether or not the sharing was consensual; upskirting; and initiation or hazing. The Haven recognises that girls are more likely to be victims and boys perpetrators in some, though not all, forms of child-on-child abuse; that all of it is unacceptable; and that both the learner harmed and the learner who caused harm are safeguarding concerns. Because almost all contact between Haven learners happens on Haven-managed platforms, staff pay particular attention to chat, breakout rooms and shared documents.
- Domestic abuse: any incident or pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading, or violent behaviour observed between family members or partners, including abuse by a child towards a parent or carer.
- Serious violence: a learner carrying or intending to use a weapon, being drawn into violence, or showing risk indicators such as disrupted education or involvement with offending. A learner who uses violence may also be a victim of it.
- Modern slavery: where a learner is identified as a victim of criminal or sexual exploitation, the DSL considers whether they are also a victim of modern slavery and makes a referral to the National Referral Mechanism where appropriate.

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): any procedure that involves partially or totally removing, or injuring, the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Teachers have a legal duty to report FGM to the police (see Female genital mutilation).
- Forced marriage and so-called honour-based abuse (see Forced marriage and honour-based abuse).
- Radicalisation and extremism: a learner being drawn into terrorism or extremist views (see Preventing radicalisation).
- Online abuse: grooming, exposure to harmful content, harmful interactions with AI chatbots or companion-style systems, or creation of AI-generated or digitally manipulated imagery.
- Mental health: self-harm, suicidal thoughts and risk of suicide are safeguarding concerns in their own right (see Mental health below).

Mental health

Mental health concerns can be safeguarding concerns in their own right. Self-harm, suicidal thoughts and risk of suicide are treated as safeguarding matters and reported to the DSL on the day they come to light, not held by an individual member of staff.

- Staff are alert to a marked change in a learner's behaviour or presentation, withdrawal from sessions or from peers, ongoing difficulty sleeping, loss of interest in things they previously engaged with, and visible signs of self-harm or self-neglect. Many of our learners mask, and these signs may be subtle on camera or in chat.
- Where a learner is in immediate danger, staff call 999 or ask the parent or carer to take the learner to A&E, and inform the DSL at once. Where the risk is not immediate, staff follow the reporting route in this policy and the DSL decides on next steps, including referral to CAMHS, the GP or the local Family Help service.
- Only trained professionals diagnose. Staff are not asked to, and a learner's neurodivergence is never treated as the explanation for distress without curiosity about what else is happening.

Contextual Safeguarding

The Haven adopts a contextual safeguarding approach, recognising that learners' experiences online extend beyond their home environment.

- Many of our learners have SEND profiles, or transient educational histories with gaps in information. Learners with SEND may not recognise abuse, may be more isolated and more dependent on adults, and may have their distress mistaken for a feature of their neurodivergence. Staff do not make that assumption.
- These factors increase vulnerability to harm, isolation, or exploitation in digital spaces such as chat groups, gaming environments, and social media platforms.
- Staff are trained to consider each learner's broader digital context, understanding that signs of abuse or neglect may present differently in online settings.
- Trauma, loneliness, and digital disinhibition can heighten risk and require sensitive, relational safeguarding responses.
- Contextual safeguarding underpins The Haven's proactive approach: curiosity, documentation, and consistency of response across the entire digital ecosystem.

Young carers

Some learners care for a parent, sibling or other family member. Caring responsibilities can affect attendance at live sessions, completion of work, sleep and wellbeing, and can make a learner reluctant to disclose difficulties at home for fear of the consequences. Staff who become aware that a learner may be a young carer tell the DSL, who considers whether a young carer's needs assessment should be requested from the home local authority and whether early help is appropriate. Being a young carer is not in itself a child protection concern, but it is always a reason for curiosity and support.

Reduced timetables and removal from learning

Many learners join The Haven on a reduced timetable as a deliberate, planned step back into education. A reduced timetable agreed with the family and commissioner, with a review date, is a support plan, not a warning sign. The DSL reviews weekly any learner whose hours have reduced since the start of their placement, who is repeatedly absent from the sessions they are timetabled for, or who has been withdrawn from sessions following incidents, and considers with the commissioning school or local authority whether early help or a Family Help referral is needed. Patterns are monitored weekly and actions are recorded in Safeguarding Meeting Minutes. While safeguarding reports are logged and monitored in TutorCruncher, patterns in attendance or changes are logged in our safeguarding meetings and attendance tracking.

Other safeguarding issues staff need to know

Staff also read the annex on further information on specific safeguarding issues (Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026). The issues below are set out here because they carry specific duties.

Preventing radicalisation (the Prevent duty)

The Haven has due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015) and follows the Prevent duty guidance and Channel duty guidance. Radicalisation can happen online, including through gaming, social media and chat, and learners who are isolated or searching for belonging and identity can be targeted.

- Staff are alert to changes in a learner's views, language, online activity or associations, and to a learner expressing extremist views. Many of our learners are autistic or otherwise neurodivergent. Staff do not treat a special interest, a direct way of speaking or a literal reading of events as a sign of radicalisation, and do not assume it cannot be one either: they tell the DSL and the DSL assesses.
- The DSL is the lead for Prevent concerns. The DSL decides whether a concern meets the threshold, discusses it where needed with the Prevent lead in the learner's home local authority or the police, and makes a Prevent referral where appropriate, which may lead to support through Channel.
- Where there is an immediate risk to life or of violence, staff call 999 and then tell the DSL.
- Prevent awareness is part of safeguarding training for all staff.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a form of child abuse and violence against girls. If a teacher discovers, because a girl under 18 tells them or because they see physical signs, that FGM appears to have been carried out on her, they have a legal duty to report it personally to the police (101, or 999 if there is an immediate risk), as soon as possible and in any event within one month of discovering it. They also tell the DSL at once. This duty applies to teachers in England and Wales and cannot be passed to someone else.

Any member of staff who is worried that a girl may be at risk of FGM, for example because of a planned trip abroad or something she or a sibling has said, tells the DSL at once. This is a child protection concern, and the DSL considers a referral to children's social care and the police. Staff do not examine a learner or question her beyond listening and recording.

Forced marriage and honour-based abuse

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime in England, Wales and Scotland and is a form of abuse. So-called honour-based abuse includes FGM, forced marriage and other practices carried out to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community, and is child abuse. Staff who have a concern tell the DSL at once. They do not approach the family or community, as this can put the learner at greater risk. The DSL considers a referral to children's social care and the police, and may take advice from the Forced Marriage Unit.

Children missing education

A learner who is on roll and stops attending without explanation, or whose whereabouts are not known, is followed up the same day. Absence can be a sign of abuse, neglect, exploitation or risk of harm. Where The Haven cannot make contact, the DSL tells the learner's home local authority and the commissioning school or local authority without delay, so that the local authority can meet its duty to identify children missing education. See Attendance, registers and Alternative Provision Reviews.

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

Where a learner is looked after, or was previously looked after, the DSL holds the contact details of the learner's social worker and the Virtual School Head, makes sure that staff who need to know are told in a proportionate way, and shares concerns with them promptly.

Private fostering

Private fostering is where a child under 16 (under 18 if disabled) lives for 28 days or more with someone who is not a parent or close relative, in an arrangement made by their parents. If staff learn of this, they tell the DSL, who tells the home local authority.

Children with a family member in custody

Learners with a parent, carer or sibling in custody, or recently released, may feel grief, shame, fear or loss, and may face stigma. Staff treat this with sensitivity and tell the DSL, who considers what support is needed.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

The Haven follows *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026* and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for each learner's home area. In line with the 2026 edition, staff are expected to:

- identify, understand and challenge racism and discrimination, recognising how they affect children's safety and access to help;
- recognise that online harm and harm in person are connected, and treat online concerns with the same seriousness;
- consider children who experience several harms at once, including hidden and complex harms such as coercive control and teenage relationship abuse;
- understand the impact of domestic abuse on children, and act on information shared by the police through Operation Encompass where a learner's commissioning school or local arrangements pass it on;

- know the difference between a referral to Family Help and a referral for a child protection (section 47) enquiry, and use the published threshold document for the learner's home authority;
- share information lawfully and promptly, using the DfE information-sharing advice.

Children questioning their gender

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 includes statutory guidance on children questioning their gender, and The Haven has regard to it. The parts of that guidance about toilets, changing rooms, sport and overnight accommodation do not apply, because The Haven has no premises, no toilets or changing facilities, offers no PE and runs no residential activity.

Where a learner or their family asks The Haven to support a social transition, for example the use of a different name or pronouns in sessions, the request is considered case by case with the DSL. The risk to the learner, including from sharing the information, is considered first, and the involvement of parents and carers is considered in line with the guidance. A clear record is kept of what was requested, what was agreed and why, and each decision is reviewed regularly, with the review recorded. The Haven's approach is neuro-affirming and identity-first, and is applied consistently with the Equality Act 2010.

Digital Safety and RSHE

- The DfE *Filtering and Monitoring Standards* apply to devices and networks a setting owns or manages. The Haven has no premises, no managed network and does not issue or manage devices: learners take part from devices they or their families own, on home internet connections The Haven does not administer. The Haven therefore does not filter or monitor learner devices and receives no automated alerts. Control is exercised over Haven-managed accounts and platforms, namely administrative settings on those accounts, platform configuration, restrictions on external contact, and the checking of resources before they are shared. The limits of that perimeter, and the controls that stand in their place, are recorded in the *Risk Assessment: Learner Access from Personally-Owned Devices*. Residual risks The Haven cannot mitigate are shared with the commissioning school or local authority at placement.
- Responsibility for technical oversight and cyber security rests with the Systems Architect, working with the Data Protection Officer, in line with the DfE *Cyber Security Standards for Schools and Colleges* and current DfE guidance on generative AI in education. Cyber security risks are assessed and mitigated, and the assessment is reviewed alongside the annual online safety review.
- The Haven's curriculum includes explicit RSHE content on online safety. Teaching addresses the four areas of online risk: content, contact, conduct, and commerce. Following Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, generative AI is treated as a risk factor within contact and conduct, including harmful interactions with AI chatbots and companion-style systems, and the creation or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes that have been digitally altered or wholly generated using AI. Learners are supported to navigate misinformation, AI risks, sextortion, and digital misogyny.
- **Mobile phones and personal devices.** Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 expects schools to be mobile phone-free environments by default. The Haven has no premises and learners take part from their own devices at home, so that expectation cannot be applied as written, and The Haven does not set the rules of a learner's home. In its place, learners are taught about phones, social media and online risk in RSHE, staff stay alert to the effect of device use on a learner's safety and wellbeing, and the DSL talks with families where phone or device use is a concern.

- **Knowing who a learner will meet online.** Parents and carers are told which Haven staff their child will be taught and supported by, and how learners can reach them, at induction and through the timetable.
- The Haven's online safety approach is reviewed annually by the DSL and the Systems Architect and reported to the Safeguarding Governor.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff:

- Must understand safeguarding can happen in both online and offline spaces
- Receive annual and contextual training, including online safety, filtering, and monitoring
- Are responsible for escalating concerns immediately to the DSL, including concerns about a learner's mental health, a weapon, or violence at home
- Know the criteria for a Family Help referral and for a child protection referral in the areas where our learners live, and know that the DSL makes the referral
- Report any concern about the conduct of an adult, however small, as set out in Allegations and concerns about adults

Governors and Proprietor:

- Provide strategic leadership and oversight
- Ensure safeguarding is embedded across all hybrid delivery models
- Ensure this policy reflects the barriers learners with SEND face in recognising and reporting abuse
- Ensure the DSL and Deputy DSL have the time, funding, training, resources and support they need, and that cover arrangements are in place when they are unavailable

DSL:

- Oversees implementation of safeguarding practices in hyflex environments
- Maintains contact with local safeguarding partners, online safety regulators, and police where required
- Ensures staff are competent in digital safeguarding, incident reporting, and triage
- Leads safeguarding response to online and onsite concerns, including de-escalating conflict between learners where appropriate
- Completes DSL training at least every two years, and refreshes knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually. The Deputy DSL is trained to the same standard.

Online and Hyflex Considerations

The Haven operates across multiple platforms. Therefore:

- Monitoring of learner behaviour and communication must be proportionate, UK GDPR-compliant, and effective
- Staff will be trained in digital safeguarding tools and protocol for capturing, reporting, and escalating online incidents
- Learners are taught explicitly about digital safety, privacy, and respectful online behaviour

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead reviews online safety concerns and platform-level settings termly to identify safeguarding trends. The Systems Architect and the Data Protection Officer maintain and configure the technical systems. There is no automated alerting on learner device use; concerns reach the DSL through disclosure, staff observation and the reporting routes set out in this policy.

Managing disclosures and reporting (how to act, how to tell us)

If a child discloses to you:

- **Listen; don't investigate.** Reassure; avoid leading questions; note exact words where possible.
- **Do not promise secrecy.** Explain you may need to share information to keep them safe.
- **Ensure immediate safety.** If at imminent risk: call **999**.
- **Tell the DSL immediately** (or Deputy DSL if DSL unavailable).
- **Record within 1 working hour.**

How anyone can report a concern (including anonymous):

- **DSL team (core hours):** dsl@autisticgirlsnetwork.org. This confidential mailbox is monitored by the DSL and Deputy DSL throughout core operating hours, so a concern reaches whoever is on duty. The names of the current postholders are shown in TutorCruncher and given at induction and safeguarding assembly throughout the term.
- **Learner check-ins (Haven Moves):** learners can also tell us how they are feeling through the Haven Moves check-in on Haven Today. Entries are seen only by the DSL and the SENCo, and the DSL is alerted when one is submitted. Learners are told on the form who will read it, and that if we are worried about their safety we will try to talk with them first and may need to share it with people who can help. The check-in is not watched all the time, so learners are also told to speak to an adult they trust, contact Childline (0800 1111) or call 999 if they need help straight away.
- **Anonymous reporting (racism and discrimination):** Anonymous reporting form, racism and discrimination (<https://forms.gle/qGvhiRvGNY46TY7n6>), routed to the DSL and reviewed daily.
- **Other anonymous safeguarding concerns:** Anonymous reporting form, safeguarding concerns (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfIbXnTbaOPCtfGGDO95XXWihHP0cwqQ3xKlbXYUSdiX0ExpQ/viewform>), routed to the DSL.
- **Out of hours / emergency: 999** (immediate risk)
- **External routes for learners:** learners can also report online harm directly to CEOP (ceop.police.uk), to Childline (0800 1111) and, for nude or semi-nude images of themselves, to Report Remove (childline.org.uk/remove). These routes are explained at induction and repeated in RSHE.
- **Concerns about an adult:** see Allegations and concerns about adults.

Recording safeguarding concerns (what to write, where)

Use The Haven's safeguarding record. Record: date/time; who was present; **verbatim** wording where possible; context (online/offline/platform); observed impact; immediate actions taken; who you informed/escalated to.

- **Don't** store notes on personal devices or send via personal email. All reports must be factual, dated, stored securely under UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, and reviewed termly by the DSL.

- **Don't** promise secrecy; if requested, record that you explained why you could not.
- Upload relevant screenshots/links and any **lesson recording timestamps** (see Lesson recordings as evidence).
- Patterns of recurring concern will be flagged for early intervention.
- All records are digital and maintained in The Haven's safeguarding record system, currently TutorCruncher. The system in use is named here deliberately; if it is replaced, this policy is updated at the same time.
- All safeguarding chronologies, family communications, and records of intervention are maintained within the same system.
- Staff receive training to ensure consistency, curiosity, and compliance in all safeguarding documentation.

Transfer of child protection files

- When a learner joins The Haven, the DSL asks the previous school or provider, and the commissioning school where there is one, for the child protection file and any information about risk, and speaks to their DSL directly where the history is significant. The DSL assesses risk and puts a support or safety plan in place where needed.
- When a learner leaves, the DSL transfers the child protection file to the new setting securely and separately from the general file, as soon as possible and within five days for an in-year transfer, or within the first five days of the start of a new term. The DSL obtains confirmation that the file has been received, keeps a record of the transfer, and includes any information about risk to the learner or to others. Information shared is necessary and proportionate, but relevant context is not left out. Where a learner has no next setting, the DSL informs the home local authority.

Lesson recordings as evidence (when and how they're used)

Live lessons are recorded for quality, training, and safeguarding, in line with the *Lesson Recording: Operational Controls*. Learners and families are told about recording at induction. Recordings are kept for one year and then securely deleted, unless a recording has been secured as evidence for a safeguarding concern, an allegation or a legal process, in which case it is kept for as long as that matter requires and the reason is recorded.

Where a recording exists and a concern arises, the DSL may **extract, secure, and disclose** relevant clips as evidence to statutory agencies (e.g. MASH/Front Door, Police) or the **LADO** for allegations about adults who work with children. Access is strictly controlled, and retention follows The Haven's Data Protection (UK GDPR), Confidentiality & Privacy Policy v10.26 (UK GDPR / DPA 2018).

Escalation pathways (DSL actions and LADO route)

The DSL (or Deputy DSL) will:

- **Child protection (non-staff):** Contact **MASH/Front Door** via published routes and thresholds; follow local procedures; record all actions/decisions.
- **Allegations about adults who work with children: Consult the LADO within 1 working day.** Where a concern about a member of staff reaches the Head, a LADO referral is considered at an early stage. Allegations against trainee, agency or contracted staff are handled in the same way; The Haven remains responsible for gathering the facts and for safeguarding even where the agency leads on any disciplinary process. See Allegations and concerns about adults.

- **Out of hours:** Use the local **Emergency Duty Service** for urgent situations and record actions.
- The DSL will maintain a log of referrals and their outcomes.
- The DSL will contact the home school of an AP learner to inform them of all safeguarding concerns, sending the safeguarding report form via email.
- Where a concern can be supported within The Haven, the DSL considers informing the learner's parents or carers, unless doing so would place the learner at greater risk.
- Contact details for relevant LADOs are listed in Appendix A.
- Concerns regarding learners or families will follow Social Care escalation routes as appropriate.
- The DSL being unavailable must never delay action to protect a child. Where the DSL and Deputy DSL are both unavailable, any member of staff can contact MASH/Front Door or the police directly, and tells the DSL as soon as possible.

Allegations and concerns about adults

This section applies to any adult working with or on behalf of The Haven, including staff, supply and agency staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors. Any concern, however small, is reported. Staff do not investigate, and do not tell the adult concerned.

Allegations (the harm threshold)

An allegation is a concern that an adult has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, including behaviour outside work.

Who a concern goes to:

- A concern about a member of staff, volunteer, contractor or agency worker goes to the Head, who is also the DSL. The Head considers whether an onward referral to the LADO is required and consults the LADO within one working day.
- A concern about the Head goes to the Proprietor, who considers the onward referral to the LADO.
- A concern about the Proprietor, or any case where there is a conflict of interest, goes straight to the LADO, and the Safeguarding Governor is told.
- A concern about the Deputy DSL goes to the DSL.

Allegations are recorded in the safeguarding record, handled fairly and quickly, and the person concerned is supported while the matter is considered. Where the LADO or police are involved, The Haven follows their advice before taking any step that could affect their enquiries.

Low-level concerns

A low-level concern is a concern that does not meet the harm threshold but suggests that an adult has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the expectations of professional conduct. Examples include being over-

friendly with learners, using personal accounts or private channels to contact a learner, favouring a learner, or humiliating a learner. Online, this includes contact outside The Haven's approved platforms and sessions held without a second adult present where one is expected.

- Anyone who has a low-level concern, including about themselves, reports it to the Head. A low-level concern about the Head is reported to the Proprietor.
- Every low-level concern is recorded with the name of the person who raised it (unless raised anonymously), the facts, and the action taken, and is kept in the safeguarding record.
- The DSL reviews low-level concerns for patterns, uses them to find training needs and weaknesses in systems, and reports a summary to the Safeguarding Governor each year. A pattern, or a single concern that proves more serious than it first looked, is dealt with as an allegation.

Referrals to the DBS and the TRA

- Where a person in regulated activity is dismissed or removed from their role because of harm to a child or a risk of harm, or would have been had they not left, The Haven makes a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. This is a legal duty, and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.
- Where a teacher has been dismissed, or would have been had they not left, for serious misconduct, the DSL considers a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Early Help and multi-agency work (what “early help” means here)

The DSL coordinates early help so learners receive support at the right time. Under *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, targeted early help is delivered through local Family Help services; because our learners live across many local authority areas, the DSL uses the published threshold document and referral route for the learner's home authority in each case. We work with: Family Help and Family Hubs; CAMHS; School Nursing; Education Welfare; SEND services; Youth Justice; Police Public Protection; and voluntary/ community partners. The DSL will:

- Undertake or contribute to early help assessments and plans;
- Share information lawfully and proportionately;
- Escalate to **MASH/Front Door** when thresholds are met; attend strategy meetings; contribute to child protection plans.

Safer recruitment (summary and cross-references)

The Haven uses safer recruitment for onsite and online roles: safeguarding-signalled adverts; structured shortlisting; online footprint checks where appropriate; **enhanced DBS with barred-list**; identity/right-to-work/qualification verification; prohibition and, where relevant, overseas checks; **two references verified pre-start**; Single Central Record maintained and audited. All pre-appointment checks are completed before an individual begins work with learners.

Following the **Crime and Policing Act 2026**, any member of staff or volunteer who teaches, trains, instructs or supervises learners on more than three days in any 30-day period, or overnight, is in regulated activity regardless of whether they are supervised, and must hold an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information before they start. Existing volunteers have been reassessed on this basis. Volunteers not in regulated activity are risk-assessed and may be asked for an enhanced check without barred list information or a basic check.

Associated policy: Safer Recruitment and Use of Volunteers Policy v10.26 (read alongside this policy).

Out-of-hours provision and lone working (cover and boundaries)

Out-of-hours provision refers to any online activity conducted beyond normal operating times (e.g. evening or weekend sessions). Where The Haven runs activities outside core hours, a **safeguarding-competent lead** is on call. If DSL/Deputy DSL are unavailable, a named senior leader trained to DSL standard provides cover. Cover arrangements are clear, reliable and known to all staff, and the dsl@ mailbox is accessible to whoever is providing cover.

Staff must comply with the Lone Working Policy v10.25, including venue risk assessments, agreed check-ins, and approved communication channels. For urgent concerns: ensure immediate safety, then **999** if required, then notify the on-call safeguarding lead, record immediately on the safeguarding log in TutorCruncher, and follow the Emergency Duty Service route as needed.

Who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is, and how to reach them

This published policy names the **role**, not the individual. The names and contact details of the current Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead are displayed prominently in TutorCruncher, where learners, families, staff and commissioning partners see them on signing in. They are also given at learner and family induction, in staff induction and training, and to commissioners in contracting. The DSL team can always be reached at dsl@autisticgirlsnetwork.org.

The role is named rather than the person on the public site because publishing an individual's name on an open website makes it searchable against them personally. This is a deliberate decision of the Proprietor, not an omission, and it does not affect anyone's ability to find out who to contact.

Filtering and monitoring (leadership oversight)

Responsibility for filtering and monitoring is held by the **Designated Safeguarding Lead**, who is a member of the senior leadership team, supported by the Systems Architect on technical matters. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 asks that the annual review be led by the senior leader responsible for filtering and monitoring with the support of the DSL and IT support; at The Haven the DSL and that senior leader are the same person, and the separation of view that the guidance intends is provided by the Systems Architect and by the Safeguarding Governor, who receives the review. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, arrangements are reviewed at least once every academic year and the review is recorded: when the checks took place, what was checked, what was identified and what was done about it.

What is reviewed reflects what The Haven actually controls: administrative settings on Haven accounts, platform configuration, restrictions on external contact, and the checking of resources before they are shared. The Haven does not operate device-level filtering or automated monitoring of learners, and does not claim to. The safeguarding response to that limitation is educational and relational rather than technical, and is set out in the *Risk Assessment: Learner Access from Personally-Owned Devices*.

Training

Keeping Children Safe in Education: reading and confirmation

- **All staff**, including those who do not work directly with learners, read **Part one** of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* (KCSIE) in full. The 2026 edition withdrew the condensed version (formerly Annex A), so there is no shorter alternative.

- Staff who work directly with learners also read the annex on further information on specific safeguarding issues (**Annex A** in the 2026 edition).
- The DSL and Deputy DSL read the annex on the role of the designated safeguarding lead (**Annex B** in the 2026 edition).
- Each member of staff **confirms in writing that they have read and understood** the relevant parts. This happens:
 - at induction, before working with learners;
 - every year, at the start of the autumn term;
 - whenever KCSIE is updated.
- The DSL checks understanding through safeguarding training and discussion, not just the signed confirmation, and follows up with anyone who is unsure.
- Confirmations are recorded in the staff training register, with the date and the KCSIE edition read. The DSL reports completion to the Safeguarding Governor each year.
- Governors and trustees also read **Part two** of KCSIE and confirm this in the same way.

Training for all staff includes:

- Review of this policy and DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- Introduction to the DSL, reporting routes, and safeguarding culture.
- Recognising safeguarding concerns that may arise both within and outside work contexts, including mental health, prejudice-based harm, harmful sexual behaviour, serious violence and exploitation.
- The Prevent duty and radicalisation, the FGM mandatory reporting duty, forced marriage and honour-based abuse, children missing education, and the reporting of low-level concerns and allegations about adults.
- Understanding safeguarding in an online environment:
 - awareness of how safeguarding principles apply in virtual classrooms and digital communication.
 - recognising signs of abuse, neglect, or distress that may be less visible online.
 - understanding the impact of learners' home environments, and maintaining appropriate professional conduct in all online interactions.
- Use of digital safeguarding platforms and protocols
- ensuring all staff are confident in using the organisation's online systems for logging, reporting, and escalating safeguarding concerns.
- understanding data protection, confidentiality, and secure digital communication when handling sensitive information or contacting learners.
- Managing disclosures online
 - equipping staff to respond appropriately and sensitively if a learner makes a safeguarding disclosure during an online session, in chat, or through other virtual channels.
- Following agreed reporting procedures immediately, to record information accurately, and to ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL is informed without delay.

Learner induction includes:

- Education on staying safe online and recognising digital risks.
- Information on lesson recording and data privacy.
- Clear explanation of how to report concerns and access support in the online learning space, including the Haven Moves check-in and external routes such as CEOP and Childline.

Attendance, registers and Alternative Provision Reviews

The Haven distinguishes between absence and 'missing from education'. Where learners access alternative provision, placements are reviewed at least half-termly to ensure that safeguarding, engagement, and curriculum needs are met. DSL oversight ensures consistent risk assessment and communication with families.

- For learners placed by a school, The Haven records attendance for each timetabled session and reports unexplained absence to the commissioning school the same day. The placing school remains responsible for the learner's safeguarding; The Haven shares information with it promptly.
- For learners on roll with The Haven, an admission register and an attendance register are kept. Attendance is recorded at the start of each school day and again later in the day, and absence is followed up promptly. The Haven notifies the home local authority of additions to and deletions from the admission register as required. Where a learner is placed by a school or local authority, that commissioner retains responsibility for the learner's registration. The Haven will respond to any lawful request for information from a local authority about a learner's attendance or education, including under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 once in force.
- Where a learner's whereabouts are not known, the process in Children missing education applies.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, each September when Keeping Children Safe in Education is reissued, or upon significant change in legislation, regulation, or operational model. Feedback from learners, staff and parents will inform updates.

The Appendices to this policy are Appendix A (LADO and allegations contacts by local authority) and Appendix B (national contacts). Further information on specific safeguarding issues is in Types of abuse, Other safeguarding issues staff need to know, and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

APPENDIX A

LADO / Allegations Contact Details by Local Authority

In Scotland there is no LADO; allegations about adults who work with children are reported through the local social work child protection route shown below. In Wales the equivalent officer is the Designated Officer (DO). All numbers are to be confirmed against the authorities' websites at each review. Where a learner lives in a local authority that is not listed, the DSL finds the LADO or equivalent contact on that authority's website, records it in the safeguarding record and adds it here at the next review.

Local Authority	Contact Details
South Lanarkshire (Scotland)	Handled via Child Protection / Social Work. Phone: 0303 123 1008.
Forth Valley (Scotland)	Stirling: 01786 471177

Local Authority	Contact Details
North Yorkshire	Duty LADO: 01609 798005. Email: lado@northyorks.gov.uk
Birmingham	LADO Team: 0121 675 1669. Email: ladoteam@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
Norfolk County Council	LADO: 01603 223473
Somerset	Somerset Direct: 0300 123 2224. Email: sdinputters@somerset.gov.uk
East Sussex	LADO: 01273 481544. Email: ESSCP.Contact@eastsussex.gov.uk
Wiltshire Council	LADO: 0300 456 0108 (Option 6). Email: LADO@wiltshire.gov.uk
Worcestershire	Duty LADO: 01905 846221. Email: LADO@worcestershire.gov.uk
Suffolk County Council	LADO: 0300 123 2044. Email: LADO@suffolk.gov.uk
Monmouthshire (Wales)	Safeguarding Unit: 01633 644598
Central Bedfordshire	LADO: 0300 300 8142. Email: LADO@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
West Berkshire	LADO: 01635 503153. Email: LADO.LADO@westberks.gov.uk
East Hampshire (Hampshire County Council)	LADO: 01962 876364. Email: LADO@hants.gov.uk
London Borough of Hounslow	SAAM Duty Desk: 020 8583 5730

APPENDIX B

National contacts

Service	How to reach them
Emergency (immediate risk)	999
Police, non-emergency	101
Childline (for learners)	0800 1111
NSPCC helpline (for adults with a concern about a child)	0808 800 5000
NSPCC whistleblowing advice line	0800 028 0285
CEOP (reporting online sexual abuse)	ceop.police.uk
Report Remove (nude or semi-nude images of under 18s)	childline.org.uk/remove
Forced Marriage Unit	Advice and guidance via gov.uk
Local authority Prevent lead and Channel	Through the learner's home local authority, or the police
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)	Referral routes via gov.uk

This PDF was generated from the published policy at policies.thehavenonline.school on 22 October 2026. The website is the authoritative, most current version of this policy.