Our Pride Our Joy
Where adventure & excellence begin

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FIERTÉ
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
Proudly inspiring all to excellence

Abridged Safeguarding Policy

Document and Version Control

Document Title	Abridged Safeguarding Policy
Effective Date	Autumn 2026
Policy Owner	Regional Manager
Policy Approver	Board of Directors

Version	Date	Amended by	Comments
V1	Spring 2020	Sharon Shilling	
V2	Spring 2021	Sharon Shilling	See below
V3	Spring 2022	Sharon Shilling	See below
V4	Autumn 2023	Sharon Shilling	See below
V5	Autumn 2024	Sharon Shilling	See below

Section	Changes Made
Purpose and aims	Equality Statement added
	Updated contact details for SCAS and KCSiE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) 2021
	Updated contact details for Chair of Directors and KCSiE 2023
V5	Updated following EYFS changes to Safeguarding and Welfare sections. New KCSiE 2025 Added new links to external documents including the new LADO referral form.
V6	Updated links to new KCSiE/Working Together to Safeguard Children. Updated telephone numbers for LADO and SFIFD. Added Definitions section and updated Right Help Right Time Approach.

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This policy has been equality impact assessed, and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality across Our Pride, Our Joy in line with The Fierté Multi-Academy Trust.

Purpose and aims.

The purpose of Our Pride Our Joy's (OPOJ) Safeguarding Policy is to ensure we:

- **Provide staff and volunteers** as well as families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.
- **Are committed** – developing a robust culture of vigilance, recognising the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and the decisions we take.
- **Build resilience** – raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, and equipping children with the language and skills to keep themselves safe.
- **Establish a safe environment** – in which children can learn and develop within an ethos of openness and are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and are listened to.
- **Support all children** regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief and those additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- **Prevent unsuitable people** – from working with children by ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our children. And to maintain an active vigilance thereafter
- **Working in partnership** with children, young people, their parents and carers and other agencies as essential in promoting children's welfare.

The aim is to follow the procedures set out by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026) Working together to safeguard children 2026

Our Pride Our Joy have adopted the SSCP (Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership) Safeguarding Policy which provides guidance to all adults working within OPOJ, whether paid or voluntary, directly employed by OPOJ or a third party.

- This policy is available on our website and is available on request from OPOJ settings. We also inform parents/carers about this policy when their children join Our Pride Our Joy.
- This policy will be reviewed in full by the Directors on an annual basis or sooner should legislation/guidance change.
- This policy sets out how the Directors discharge its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within Our Pride Our Joy. Our

policy applies to all staff; paid and unpaid, working in OPOJ including Trustees and Directors.

- The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) during induction, alongside our staff Code of Conduct Policy. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026)
- Our Pride Our Joy follows the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership policies and procedures. Home - Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Definitions

The Children Act 1989 definition of a child is: anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces or is in hospital. Child abuse: Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse within their family or harm outside of the family. There are four main categories of abuse which are; sexual, physical, emotional and neglect. It is important to be aware of more specific type of abuse that fall within these categories, they are

- Bullying and Cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child criminal exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Grooming
- Non-recent abuse
- Online abuse
- Peer on Peer abuse

Safeguarding children: Safeguarding children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

Ethos

The child's welfare is of paramount importance; we are a child centred establishment.

We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to maintain a professional attitude of *it could happen here* where safeguarding is concerned.

Our Pride Our Joy is committed to safeguarding children and promoting children's welfare and expects all staff, directors, volunteers, and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. Everyone has a responsibility to **act without delay** to protect children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours that underpins this commitment. Our Pride Our Joy seeks to work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable or in need.

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and **not see these as insignificant.** On occasions, a referral is justified by a **single incident** such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, **concerns accumulate over a period** and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, **it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns** in accordance with this policy to allow the Designated Safeguarding Lead to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity**.**

We maintain a professional attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When there are concerns about the welfare of a child, staff members will always act in the best interests of the child. This policy has been developed in-conjunction with our culture of prevention, protection and support and will be linked with all our policies and those of the Trust. Our Pride Our Joy will continue to maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to, and feel safe. Children are encouraged to talk freely with any staff member if they are worried or concerned about something. We follow the what to do if a child is being abused guidance:

Key Principles

OPOJ recognises that scrutiny, challenge, and supervision are key to safeguarding children.

- OPOJ is committed to working with other agencies to provide early help for children before they become at risk of harm or require a 'child in need' statutory assessment.
- Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. '
- OPOJ will work in partnership with other agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, including the need to share information about a child to safeguard them.
- OPOJ will work with other agencies to ensure any actions that are part of a multi-agency coordinated plan are completed in a timely way.
- OPOJ will follow the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership's procedures and provide them with information as required www.staffsscp.org.uk

- Staff, children, and families will need support following child protection processes being followed.
- Children have a right to learn ways to keep themselves safe from harm and exploitation. We will provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills, concepts, attitudes, and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being.
- Safeguarding issues will be addressed through the PSED (Personal, Social and Emotional Development) area of learning, for example self-esteem and emotional literacy.
- All Our Pride Our Joy policies, which support our ethos of safeguarding, will be interlinked with this Safeguarding Policy and those of the Academy schools with whom we are affiliated.
- Should there be a serious accident, injury to or death of a child while in the care of OPOJ, providers will notify SFIFD and Ofsted and will act on any advice provided from those agencies. Should it be necessary RIDDOR will be notified within 15 days using the online form.

Safer Recruitment & Selection

There is a duty under Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 for Our Pride Our Joy to be committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to children from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

Our Pride Our Joy has policies and procedures that cover the recruitment of all directors, trustees, employees and volunteers. For further details please see EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers Trust Safe Recruitment Policy, and Trust Code of Conduct Policy.

All staff and directors are aware there is an expectation to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). Providers will not allow people whose suitability has not been checked, including through a criminal records check, to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for.

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006: effective 31 August 2018

Safer recruitment procedures include but are not limited to

Only accepting completed application forms

Obtaining two verified electronic references prior to interview if possible. One reference must be from current or most recent employer

Obtaining a social media check

Completing a Safeguarding Self Declaration Form and Health Questionnaire

Interviews completed by a minimum of three members of staff, one of whom must be Safer Recruitment trained.

All relevant documentation returned satisfactorily including Right to Work and enhanced DBS check.

Making Referrals

Where a child is registered with Our Pride Our Joy**,** consultation must first take place with the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) who will be the most appropriate person to initiate any referral. A written record of concerns should be made using the incident record form located on My Concern and then the DSL will make the decision whether a referral is needed to the Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door (SFIFD) or the child's existing social worker or implement an Early Help Assessment. If necessary, the DSL can contact the Education Safeguarding Advice Service (ESAS) for advice as to how to proceed. If the child lives outside of Staffordshire, the matter will be referred by the DSL to the relevant Children's Social Care team in the area where the child resides.

Whilst professionals should in general discuss any concerns with the child, their parents / carers and where possible seek their agreement to making referrals to Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door (SFIFD), **this should only be done where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place the child or others at increased risk of suffering significant harm. Consent / agreement is not required for child protection referrals;** however, you, as the referring professional, would need to where possible, discuss with and inform parents or carers that you are making a referral as stated above, **unless** by alerting them you could be putting that child or others at risk.

Escalation Policy

Professionals providing services to children and their families should work co-operatively across all agencies, using their confidence, skills and experience to make a robust contribution to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within the framework of discussions, meetings, conferences, and case management.

Occasionally situations may arise where there is professional disagreement in relation to safeguarding a child. Resolution is an integral part of professional joint working to safeguard children, and this policy seeks to identify how such resolution can be achieved where there are professional differences of opinion.

All professionals have a responsibility to work together and to help to prevent disagreements from escalating where possible.

Working with Parents/Carers

At Our Pride Our Joy we are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area. OPOJ follows legislation that aims to act in the best interests of the child.

When new children join OPOJ, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to Families First Services or other agencies.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly, and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity, and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or if it is necessary to do so to safeguard a child from harm.

We will seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child before making a referral, unless to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns OPOJ has about a child will not prevent the Designated Safeguarding Lead making a referral to Families Integrated Front Door in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

To keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, OPOJ requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives.
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- A minimum of two emergency contact details (different from above)
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above).
- Any legal or criminal changes which effects parental responsibility e.g., bail condition, court orders, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

OPOJ will retain this information on the child's file. OPOJ will only share information about children with adults who have parental responsibility for a pupil or where a parent has given permission and OPOJ has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.

Staffordshire Early Help and Family Help

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and acting as support to the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

Every member of staff including volunteers working with children in our settings are advised to maintain an attitude of **'professional curiosity and respectful uncertainty'** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to act as outlined in this policy.

Early intervention is a key part of a wider continuum of services and will work alongside universal services. For early intervention to be successful each stage of the process must be carried out well and followed through by every person who works with children, young people and families and has an individual responsibility for early intervention.

DSLs should complete the Staffordshire Early Help Assessment (EHA) when:

- Age-appropriate progress is not being made, and the causes are unclear.
- The support of more than one additional agency is needed to meet the child's needs.
- Children do not meet threshold, yet concerns are emerging e.g., attendance, behavioural, academic progress, change in behaviour.

Our Pride Our Joy refer to and seek guidance from the Right Help Right Time Approach held by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The Right Help Right Time Approach is the overarching document for the whole of the children's workforce. This multi-agency threshold approach is a guidance tool that all agencies, professionals and volunteers can use to consider how best to meet the needs of individual children and young people. The approach is available on the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website Right Help, Right Time - Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Prevent Duty

Some organisations in England, Scotland and Wales have a duty, as a specified authority under section 26 of the Counter terrorism and Security Act 2015, to identify vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty. These organisations include:

- Schools
- Registered childcare providers
- Local authorities
- Police
- Prisons and probation services
- NHS trusts and foundations
- Other organisations may also have Prevent duties if they perform delegated local authority functions.

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. More information is available on the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website https://www.staffsscp.org.uk.

Should staff be concerned about a child's exposure to radical or extreme views they should report it to Staffordshire Police Prevent Team 01785 232054, 01785 233109 or email prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers

Directors ensure there are procedures in place to manage allegations of abuse against staff members, peer on peer and the Regional Manager.

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and best outcomes for the children at Our Pride Our Joy. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

We will take all steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our settings are safe to work with children. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in *Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership Protocol: Managing Allegations of abuse Against Persons who work with Children and role of LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)* and Part 4 of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*, DfE (Department for Education) (2026) are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO can be contacted on 0800 1313126 or via the website NEW LADO Referral form - Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

If an allegation is made or information is received about an adult who works at Our Pride Our Joy which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Regional Manager immediately. Should an allegation be made against the Regional Manager, this will be reported to the Chair of Directors. If neither the Regional Manager nor Chair of Directors are contactable on that day; the information must be passed to and dealt with by the CEO of the Fierte Multi Academy Trust

Contact details.

Regional Manager Sharon Shilling 07398 210286 sshilling@opoj.fierte.org
Chair of Directors Joanne Smith j.smith@fierte.org
CEO Maria Hamblin ceo@fierte.org

The Regional Manager or Chair of Directors will seek advice from the LADO within one working day. No member of staff or Board of Directors will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

Any member of staff, parent or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Regional Manager or Chair of Directors should contact ***the LADO directly on 0800 1313126 or visit the website*** NEW LADO Referral form - Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
Staffordshire LADO referral form

An NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available. Staff can call 0800 0280285 between 08.00 and 20.00, Monday to Friday and 09.00 and 18.00 at weekends. The email address is help@nspcc.org.uk

Vulnerable Children

We recognise that our safeguarding responsibilities are clearly linked to our responsibilities for ensuring that appropriate responses are in place for children who are absent or who go missing from education. We will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend regularly, or who has been absent without OPOJ permission for a continuous period of 20 days or more in line with the Staffordshire Funding Providers Agreement 2026 Microsoft Word - EEF Provider Agreement 2026

Our Pride Our Joy are aware of the potential for children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) to have additional barriers when it comes to safeguarding, OPOJ recognises that this group can be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

Confidentiality/Information Sharing

At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers, and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026). Our Pride Our Joy works closely with Staffordshire Children's Social Care and where appropriate, from a placing local authority.

OPOJ recognises the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies. The General Data Protection Act places a duty on organisations and individuals with regards to processing personal information fairly and lawfully. OPOJ **adhere to data protection,** yet we **do not allow this to stand in our way** in the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of our children in our care.

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, states that information sharing is a legal duty. Where settings hold information relevant to safeguarding or promoting a child's welfare and sharing it may help another agency covered by the duty to act, they must share it. There is no threshold that must be met first.

We will use our professional judgement to ensure that the information shared is focused and proportionate. The only exception to sharing is where sharing would be more detrimental to the child than not sharing, which the guidance expects to be rare.

Data protection has never been a barrier to sharing, and that has not changed. It is no longer the case of whether information should be shared, it is that it must be shared. This may include summarising or omitting information, which is not relevant for safeguarding purposes, but we will take care not to omit any information where it may be relevant.

Responding to other agency requests is now part of the duty, not just good practice.

Social Media:

All employees and volunteers should be aware of the Fierte Trust social media policy and procedures and the Code of Conduct for safeguarding children on digital platforms.

Use of Mobile Phones & Other Digital Technology:

All employees, trustees and volunteers should be aware of the Fierte Trust policy and procedures regarding the use of mobile phones and any digital technology and understand that it is unlawful to share images and content on any digital platform without the explicit consent of the person with parental responsibilities. (Procedures for posting children's images online)

There is a clear policy for the use of mobile phones on the premises as well as reporting and storing of medication. Parents are not allowed to use their mobile phones on site and must leave phones at the school office when volunteering in the main building. At all settings staff mobile phones must be kept in a locked cupboard and not accessed in rooms where children are present. Smart watches must be disabled during the day and the use of Smart Glasses which can record or take photographs are not permitted.

Training & Awareness

Our Pride Our Joy ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its directors, trustees, employees, volunteers and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it (e.g. contractors).

For all employees who are working with children, this requires them as a minimum to have level 1 awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children
- Understand the difference between safeguarding children and child protection
- How to spot the signs of abuse and neglect
- How to respond to the indicators of abuse and neglect and keep children safe
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Children Policy

All staff will refresh their Level 1 training annually.
All Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are level 2 or 3 trained and renew these using the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership training. Level 4 training is also available for DSLs.
Each week staff will use 7 Minute Briefings, questions and case studies to reflect on safeguarding scenarios and ensure safeguarding always remains a priority focus
DSL to attend a training course on managing allegations of abuse made against a person who works with children and cascade to all practitioner /assistants.

Staffordshire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership provide safeguarding children training for private and voluntary sectors via their Learning Zone – Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (staffsscp.org.uk)

To ensure staff keep safeguarding at the front of their practice, teams revisit both safeguarding and child protection throughout the terms through 7-minute briefings, quizzes and questionnaires.

All staff are required to complete a Safeguarding Self Declaration at the start of each academic year.

Our Pride Our Joy Policies

All Our Pride Our Joy policies and procedures are available in full on the website. Our Pride, Our Joy Ltd - Home The full Trust Safeguarding Policy document is also available on the Trust Website Fierté Multi-Academy Trust - Home

Contact Details

- Ofsted – General enquiries: 0300 123 1231 e-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- Regional Manager Sharon Shilling sshilling@opoj.fierte.org
- Chair of Directors Joanne Smith j.smith@fierte.org
- CEO Maria Hamblin ceo@fierte.org
- Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door (SFIFD) 0300 111 8033
  8.30am – 5.00pm Monday to Thursday
  8.30am- 4.30pm Friday
- Emergency Duty Services (out of hours safeguarding concerns) 0345 604 2886 or email eds.team.manager@staffordshire.gov.uk
- Education Safeguarding Advice Service (ESAS) 01785 895836 or email esas@staffordshire.gov.uk
- Staffordshire Police Prevent Team 01785 232054, 01785 233109 or email prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk
- **Police**
  Emergency – 999

  Non-emergency – 101

Useful websites:

- **Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership** Home - Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
- **Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre** (CEOP) – www.ceop.police.uk
- **NSPCC** – 24-hour Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000 https://www.nspcc.org.uk/
- **WOMENS AID** - 24 Hour Helpline: **0870 2700 123** Staffordshire Women's Aid - Staffordshire Women's Aid

Links with other Policies:

This policy has been devised with due regard for the statutory guidance from the DfE Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK and EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers These documents are read alongside:

Working together to safeguard children 2026
Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures
What to do if you are Worried a Child is being Abused-Advice for Practitioners
Information Sharing Duty Guidance 2026 DfE stat guidance template

This Abridged Safeguarding Policy is linked to the Trust's,

- Individual Academy Safeguarding Policy
- Trust Data Protection and IT Policies and Procedures
- Trust Whistleblowing Policy
- Trust Staff Code of Conduct
- Trust Safer Recruitment Policy