



# Athena Learning Trust

## Trust-wide

### Safeguarding Policy

#### 2024-25

#### **Review**

Reviewed on: 19th July 2024

Reviewed by: Board

Next review: 19th July 2025

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## **PART A**

### **1.1. Application**

This Trust Safeguarding Policy applies to the Athena Learning Trust as a whole and to all the schools and service units in the Trust, to all paid and unpaid staff, volunteers, governors and Trustees of the Trust and its schools, and to all contractors and other people using or visiting any of the premises of the Trust or its schools

The Athena Learning Trust, including all the schools, their Trustees, governors and staff, must abide by this Athena Learning Trust Safeguarding Policy.

This Policy is subject to the Trust's Scheme of Delegation for Governance Functions. If there is any ambiguity or conflict then the Scheme of Delegation and any specific alteration or restriction to the Scheme approved by the Board of Trustees takes precedence.

The Policy sets the framework within which the Trust's schools and Trust Shared Service operate under their respective safeguarding policies and procedures. Each school within the Trust and the Trust Shared Service will each maintain and abide by their own Safeguarding Policies and procedures that must be consistent with this Trust Safeguarding Policy, and as qualified by this Policy in Section 3. Where there is any conflict, this Trust Safeguarding Policy overrides, and if there is any doubt the Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (Athena Learning Trust DSL) should be consulted.

In implementing this policy and associated policies and procedures the Governing Body, Principal and school staff, and Trust Shared Service staff, must take account of any advice or instruction given to them by the Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (Athena Learning Trust DSL), Athena Learning Trust CEO or Board of Trustees.

If there is any question or doubt about the interpretation or implementation of this Policy, the Athena Learning Trust CEO should be consulted.

### **1.2. Approval and review**

Maintenance of this Policy is the responsibility of the Athena Learning Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (Athena Learning Trust DSL).

This Policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on: July 19th 2024

This Policy is due for annual review by: July 19th 2025

## Terminology

- The Trust means the Athena Learning Trust (Athena Learning Trust).
- School means a school within the Athena Learning Trust.
- Principal means the Principal or principal of the school.
- CEO means the chief executive officer of the Athena Learning Trust.
- Governors and Trustees includes governors, Trustees, non-governor members of Trust Committees and members of the Trust Panel and are covered by the category of 'staff' unless explicitly stated
- Governing Body means the committee of the Board of Trustees to which Trustees have delegated appropriate powers and functions relating to the governance of the school.
- Staff means paid and unpaid staff with a contract of employment with the Trust.
- Volunteer means volunteers working in Trust premises or with children on the roll of a Trust school under some form of agreement with the Trust or school; volunteers are covered by the category of 'staff' unless explicitly stated.
- Visitors means casual visitors to and users of the Trust premises, including people working with children on a voluntary basis not covered by the category of formal 'volunteer'
- Contractors means people working in Trust premises under a formal contract with an external organisation.

References in this Policy to a school in the Trust should also be read as the Trust Shared Service for services, functions and staff of the Trust that are not contained within a school budget and/or are not the responsibility of a Principal and/or Governing Body. With respect to the Trust Shared Service, references in this Policy to the responsibilities of the Principal and Governing Body should be read as the Athena Learning Trust CEO and the Trust Shared Services Committee respectively.

### 1.3. Responsibilities – Designated Persons

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body and Principal of each school, and the Board of Trustees and Athena Learning Trust CEO for the Trust Shared Service, to ensure that their school/service and its staff adhere to this Athena Learning Trust Safeguarding Policy; in implementing this Policy the Governing Body, Principal and Trust staff must take account of any advice given to them by the Athena Learning Trust DSL, Athena Learning Trust Deputy DSL, Athena Learning Trust CEO and/or Board of Trustees.

- **Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Athena Learning Trust:**  
Ben Parnell  
Email: [bparnell@athenalearningtrust.uk](mailto:bparnell@athenalearningtrust.uk)  
Telephone: 01566 701788
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead for Athena Learning Trust (Athena Learning Trust DSL):**  
Athena Learning Trust CEO, Ben Parnell  
Email: [bparnell@athenalearningtrust.uk](mailto:bparnell@athenalearningtrust.uk)
- **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Athena Learning Trust (Athena Learning Trust Deputy DSL):**  
Athena Learning Trust CFOO, Shirley Si Ahmed  
Email: [ssiahmed@athenalearningtrust.uk](mailto:ssiahmed@athenalearningtrust.uk)
- **Nominated Safeguarding & Child Protection Trustee:**  
Gilly Sanders  
Email: [gsanders@athenalearningtrust.uk](mailto:gsanders@athenalearningtrust.uk)
- **Chair of the Board of Trustees:**  
Elaine Marshall  
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- **Athena Learning Trust Director of People – lead for safer recruitment:**  
Hannah Frame  
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- **Athena Learning Trust Attendance Lead:**  
Mike Hickman  
[hickmanm@cambornescience.co.uk](mailto:hickmanm@cambornescience.co.uk)

Each school within the Trust will have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (School DSL). Safeguarding concerns relating to a child at the school, relating to any adult employed by or visiting the school, or relating to an incident that took place at the school, should be raised with the School DSL in accordance with Part B of this Policy and the School Safeguarding Policy. (Please refer to the School Safeguarding Policy that can be found on the school's website or contact the school for further information.)

#### **1.4. Associated policies and procedures**

The following Trust policies and procedures are an integral part of this Athena Learning Trust Safeguarding Policy:

- Each Athena Learning Trust school's School Safeguarding Policy.

The following Trust policies are directly related to and complement this Trust Safeguarding Policy:

- Athena Learning Trust Anti Radicalisation Policy.
- Athena Learning Trust Staff Codes of Conduct.
- Athena Learning Trust Trustee and Governors Code of Conduct.
- Athena Learning Trust Whistleblowing Policy.
- Athena Learning Trust Recruitment and Selection, HR and disciplinary policies and procedures.

In addition to their Safeguarding Policies and procedures, the Trust and its schools have policies and procedures to cover the roles of staff, students and parents in respect of health and safety, anti-bullying, racism and discrimination and data protection.

Issues of child protection are raised with students through the Character Curriculum.

The Board of Trustees has approved a Model School Safeguarding Policy for schools.

Each school in the Athena Learning Trust will agree and maintain its own School Safeguarding Policy (Model School) and any related Procedures and guidance for staff that includes all relevant legislative requirements and guidance including the latest KCSIE and are consistent with this Trust Safeguarding Policy. School Safeguarding Policies will be reviewed and approved by the Governing Body annually.

Where a school does not have a School Safeguarding Policy that is consistent with this Trust Policy and has been approved by the Governing Body, the Athena Learning Trust Model School Safeguarding Policy will apply.

School Safeguarding Policies and this Trust-wide Safeguarding Policy are subject to, qualified by and over-ridden by the policies and procedures set out in Part B where they contradict.

Where there is any conflict between a school or service safeguarding policy or procedure and this Trust Safeguarding Policy, this Trust Safeguarding Policy overrides. If there is any doubt or question about the application of this Policy, the Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (Athena Learning Trust DSL) should be consulted.

## **PART B**

### **1. Principles -“The welfare of the Child is paramount”**

Athena Learning Trust places the highest importance on its duty to safeguard and promote the welfare and safety of all children in its care.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone’s** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children, and has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

All Trust staff and volunteers have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and 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.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this Policy as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge (this bullet point is new)
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Children includes everyone under the age of 18 (Education Act 2002 and Children Act 1989).

All people working with children and visiting school premises must be aware that children may be at risk of harm or abuse, are well placed to observe signs of abuse, have a duty to protect children from harm and abuse, and have a responsibility to identify and report child welfare concerns and take appropriate action in association with other Trust staff and volunteers, visitors, families and other agencies.



## 2. Legal Context

This Policy and Procedure accords with:

- The Education Act 2002.
- The Children Act 2004.
- “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (*KCSIE - DfE guidance September 2024*).
- “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (*HM Government, July 2018*).
- “What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused Advice for practitioners” (*DfE guidance March 2015*).
- “Mental health and behaviour in schools” (*DfE guidance November 2018*).

If safeguarding concerns are raised with the Trust or one of its schools, the child protection procedures of the local authority within which the school is located, or where the issue arose or the incident took place, will be followed.

If lower level concerns or needs (i.e. not child protection) are identified about a particular student, the Trust will follow the model of Early Help that is used by the local authority within which the school is located, or where the issue arose or the incident took place.

## 3. Requirements of the Policy

### 3.1. Requirements on individuals

All staff and volunteers working in Trust premises or with children on the roll of a Trust school, all contractors working on, visitors to and users of Trust premises, and all Trustees and governors of the Trust and its schools:

- Must comply with this Trust Safeguarding Policy and with the School Safeguarding Policy as appropriate for where they are employed, the Trust premises they are in, or where an incident takes place.
- Are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motives or intentions.

All staff of and visitors to a Trust school are subject to that school’s School Safeguarding Policy.



Safeguarding concerns relating to a child at the school, to any member of staff or volunteer at the school or visitor to the school, or relating to an incident that took place at the school, should be reported to the School DSL and dealt with in accordance with section 2.4 below and the School Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding concerns relating to any member of staff of, volunteer at, or visitor to, the Trust Shared Service should be reported to the Athena Learning Trust DSL and dealt with in accordance with section 2.3 below and the Athena Learning Trust Safeguarding Policy.

If the School or Trust Shared Service DSL cannot be contacted promptly, the matter should be reported to the Deputy DSL; if there is no named Deputy DSL or the Deputy DSL cannot be contacted, the matter should be reported to the Principal. If the Principal cannot be contacted the matter should be reported to the Athena Learning Trust DSL.

In addition, all employees of the Trust are required to abide by the Trust Staff Code of Conduct.

### **3.2. Requirements on the Trust as a whole**

The Board of Trustees will appoint:

- A DSL for the Trust.
- A Deputy DSL.
- A Lead Trustee for Safeguarding & Child Protection.

The Trust will have a 'Code of Conduct' that all Trust staff, including paid and unpaid staff and formal volunteers, will be required to abide by.

The Trust will have a standard safeguarding clause that all Trust schools and Trust Shared Service will apply to any contractors working on Trust premises.

Trustees and governors are required to abide by the Trustee and Governor Code of Conduct.

The following policies and procedures complement this Safeguarding Policy and are part of the Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

- Athena Learning Trust Whistleblowing Policy.
- Athena Learning Trust Anti-radicalisation Policy

- Safer Recruitment Policies and Procedures.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is the Athena Learning Trust CEO, the matter must be reported to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, who will inform the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is a Trustee or non-Trustee member of a Board Committee, the matter must be reported to the Athena Learning Trust CEO who will inform the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is a member of a Governing Body, the matter must be reported to the Athena Learning Trust CEO who will inform the Chair of the Board of Trustees and Chair of the Governing Body.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is the Chair of the Board of Trustees, the matter must be reported to the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer.

When on non-Trust educational premises, members of Trust staff, including volunteers, Trustees and governors, should in addition follow the safeguarding policy of the relevant institution.

Whenever any member of Trust staff or formal volunteer, including a governor or Trustee, intends to visit a Trust school they should ensure that they know the name of the current School DSL.

### **3.3. Requirements on Trust Shared Service**

The Trust Shared Service will have appropriate policies and procedures in order to comply with all relevant legislative requirements and guidance, including the latest KCSIE and consistent with this Trust Safeguarding Policy.

The Trustee for safeguarding will be the Nominated Child Protection Trustee – see section 1.4.

The Athena Learning Trust DSL is responsible for and has delegated authority for ensuring that the Trust-wide Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures are fit for purpose and

kept up-to-date. The Trust-wide Safeguarding Policy will be formally reviewed by the Athena Learning Trust DSL at least annually, and approved by Trustees.

All staff employed by the Trust Shared Service will be subject to and required to abide by the Trust Staff Code of Conduct.

Anyone who has a safeguarding concern relating to a child in, member of staff, paid or unpaid, volunteer or contractor in, or visitor to the Trust Shared Service should report the matter to the Athena Learning Trust DSL and it will be dealt with under the Trust Shared Service Safeguarding Policy.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is a member of staff of the Trust Shared Service the Athena Learning Trust DSL must report the matter to the Athena Learning Trust CEO, and it will be dealt with under the Trust Staff Disciplinary Policy. The Athena Learning Trust CEO must inform and take advice from the Athena Learning Trust Head of HR.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is the Principal, the School DSL must report the matter to the Athena Learning Trust CEO and the CEO will inform the Chair of the Governing Body and the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is the Athena Learning Trust CEO, the matter must be reported to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, who will inform the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer.

If a member of Trust Shared Service staff, including a volunteer or Trustee, has a safeguarding concern relating to a child in or on the roll of a Trust school, or a member of staff, paid or unpaid, volunteer or contractor in, or a supply teacher or anyone visiting or using the premises of a Trust school, they should report the matter to the School DSL and it will be dealt with under the School Safeguarding Policy.

### **3.4. Requirements on schools**

Each school in the Trust will have an approved and fit-for-purpose Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures as required to comply with all relevant legislative requirements and guidance, including the latest [KCSIE](#) and consistent with this Trust-wide Safeguarding Policy.

The Governing Body of each school in the Trust will appoint a link governor for safeguarding who is a member of the Governing Body.

The Principal of each school in the Trust will appoint a School DSL who is responsible for and has delegated authority for ensuring that the school Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures are fit for purpose and kept up-to-date.

The school Safeguarding Policy will be formally reviewed by the School DSL at least annually, and approved by the school's Governing Body.

All staff employed by the school will be required to abide by the Trust Staff Code of Conduct.

Anyone who has a safeguarding concern relating to a child at the school or on the school roll, a member of staff, paid or unpaid of the school, a supply teacher, a volunteer or contractor at the school, or anyone visiting or using school premises; or relating to an incident that took place at the school, should report the matter to the School DSL and it will be dealt with in accordance with the School Safeguarding Policy

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is a member of staff or volunteer of the school the School DSL must report the matter to the school Principal, and it will be dealt with under the Trust Staff Disciplinary Policy. The school Principal must inform and take advice from the Athena Learning Trust Head of HR.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is a member of staff or volunteer of the Trust Shared Service the School DSL must report the matter to the Athena Learning Trust CEO, and it will be dealt with under the Trust Staff Disciplinary Policy. The Athena Learning Trust CEO must inform and take advice from the Athena Learning Trust Head of HR.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is a supply teacher the Designated Safeguarding lead must report the matter to the Principal and to the **Designated Officer** (LADO) of the school's local authority.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is a Trustee or member of a Trust committee including a Governing Body, the School DSL must report the matter to to the Athena Learning Trust CEO and the Athena Learning Trust CEO will the Chair of the Board of Trustees and, where appropriate, the Chair of the Governing Body.



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Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is the Principal, the School DSL must report the matter to the Athena Learning Trust CEO and the CEO will inform the Chair of the Governing Body and the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer.

Where the subject of a safeguarding concern is the Athena Learning Trust CEO, the matter must be reported to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, who will inform the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer.

The Principal must ensure that anyone hiring the school premises for non-school activities has appropriate Safeguarding in place, regardless of whether or not the children are on the school roll.