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	Signed:	
	Position:	Chair of Trustees
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Table of contents:	Introduction What we do Our commitment Types of abuse • <i>Specific safeguarding issues</i> • <i>Groups of students particularly at risk</i> Our approach to safeguarding • <i>Training</i> • <i>Prevention – Safer recruitment</i> • <i>Management of workers – Code of conduct</i> • <i>Responding to disclosures and concerns</i> • <i>Procedure</i> • <i>Recording, reporting and managing confidential information</i> • <i>Safeguarding concerns or allegations of abuse made against workers</i> • <i>Working in partnership</i> Data protection Retention of child protection information Disseminating/reviewing policies and procedures Appendix A – Safeguarding contact information	
Substantive changes since last review:	July 2025– Artificial Intelligence and Safeguarding training for staff	

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Acorn Alternative Provision is committed to ensuring good practices are in place and followed to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom we come into contact.

Acorn AP follows current Charity Commission safeguarding guidance, including Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees and relevant Serious Incident Reporting requirements.

Show more lines

Trustees aim to set an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding, so that it is safe for those affected to come forward and report incidents and concerns with the assurance these will be handled sensitively and properly.

We are insured for the work we do through Marsh Commercial Insurance, specialists in charity work. This includes Public Liability and Professional Indemnity insurance.

The contact details for Acorn Alternative Provision are:

<i>Registered office:</i>	11 Nab Wood Terrace, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD18 4HU
<i>Telephone number:</i>	07494 494 537
<i>Email:</i>	info@acornap.org.uk
<i>or via the website:</i>	www.acornap.org.uk

We take seriously the statutory guidance issued by the DfE, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and have ensured our procedures meet the current versions of these standards. This includes ensuring the following safeguarding systems are explained to all staff during induction:

- Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE: Part 1 (current version)
- Behaviour Policy
- Workers Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- Role of designated safeguarding lead (and deputies).

In line with statutory guidance in KCSIE, trustees will ensure that all workers read Part 1 of the updated guidance, making it available electronically, to enable ease of access to hyperlinks.

We are fully supportive of the work of the Local Safeguarding Partnerships in areas where our Centres are based and our young people reside and, where required, have passed a copy of the policy to them and other organisations, including funding bodies. Contact

details for referrals are given in Appendix A, the final pages of this document for ease of access.

What we do

Acorn Alternative Provision (also known as Acorn AP) is a charity set up to provide alternative education solutions for young people on the margins of mainstream. We currently offer small group and one-to-one work aimed at equipping young people to manage their emotions effectively, boosting self-confidence and self-esteem and developing life skills, alongside supporting with and filling gaps in English and Maths. We seek to facilitate effective and long-lasting reintegration to mainstream education wherever possible.

Our programmes are primarily based in local centres, in buildings operated by the churches we partner with, and are staffed by fully checked and trained staff and volunteers. Some outreach work takes place in local schools and in the local community. All young people who we work with will be vulnerable, and it is likely many will be involved in risk-taking behaviours. We are conscious that though our contact with the families of our students, workers may also come into contact with vulnerable adults in their work. Assessment of risk and clear working practices are in place for all aspects of our work, including one-to-one work, lone working, home visits and use of shared buildings and our staff and volunteers are prepared through initial training, then through ongoing support, supervision and professional development.

Our commitment

At Acorn Alternative Provision we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge they can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect as well as exploitation. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.

We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect, abuse and exploitation. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.”

As an organisation, Acorn Alternative Provision have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

Acorn Alternative Provision is committed to:

- Endorsing and following all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Providing ongoing safeguarding training for all its workers, including volunteers and regularly reviewing our safeguarding procedure.
- Supporting the designated safeguarding leads in their work and in any actions they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.

Types of abuse

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE) defines abuse as a form of maltreatment of a child.

"Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children."

The four main types of abuse referred to in Keeping Children Safe in Education are:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

Our provision is aware of the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help, or protection.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the Centre and/or can occur between children outside the Centre. All workers, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families and online. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Specific safeguarding issues

National safeguarding issues

Part 1 and Annex B of DfE guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education² contains important information about known specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues that are nation-wide. Trustees and workers (staff and volunteers) should read this guidance and use the links to obtain further information and help gain the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard our children. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on these and other specific safeguarding issues.

Local safeguarding issues

Some safeguarding issues are known to be particularly prevalent in particular areas of the country. Centre-based designated safeguarding leads will be aware of local issues through connecting with local networks and safeguarding partnerships and through analysis of Centre data.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. More information including definitions and indicators are included in DfE KCSIE Part 1 and KCSIE Annex B³.

Female Genital Mutilation

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

If any worker discovers that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 (either through disclosure or visual evidence – although it will be rare for workers to see visual evidence as they should NOT be examining students), they must personally report this to the police, in addition to discussing the case with their DSL and involving children's social care. The duty does not apply in relation to girls over the age of 18 or to 'at risk' or suspected cases, in which workers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

FGM is an example of so-called 'Honour-based abuse', along with Forced Marriage.

Mental Health

All workers should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Workers however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that workers are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If workers have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following this safeguarding policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. KCSIE Part 1 provides links to further information and advice on mental health support for children.

Child on child abuse

Child on child abuse can happen both inside and outside of the Centre and online. It is important that all workers recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. Even if there are no reports in their Centre it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if workers have any concerns regarding child on child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, rape or sexual assault (this may include an online element);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual
- harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;

- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Abuse of this kind should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in our provision and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We use lessons to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. We understand the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child on child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys, perpetrators).

Any incidents of child on child abuse will be investigated and dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy, which outlines the actions that may be taken in response to such behaviour. All incidents of child on child abuse should also be recorded and dealt with as safeguarding concerns for the victim and perpetrator and any other child affected (whenever they are Acorn AP students), ensuring that all individuals (victims, perpetrators and any other children affected) receive the support they need in addressing the issue.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between peers

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. It is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. It is also important that other children and workers are supported and protected as appropriate.

Serious Violence

Workers should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school,

a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

Workers should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice is provided by the Home Office – links listed in KCSIE: Part 1.

Preventing radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is seen as part of Acorn AP's wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm, abuse and exploitation. During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, workers should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help, or protection. Acorn AP workers should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme. Contact details for the local Channel scheme can be found in Appendix A.

From 1 July 2015, schools have been subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.⁴ Acorn AP uses the revised Prevent Guidance along with DfE advice for schools⁵ to inform procedures to ensure the requirements are met in each of the four general themes (risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies).

Spiritual Abuse

⁴ Bodies to which the duty applies must have regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015 ("[the revised Prevent duty guidance](#)"). Paragraphs 57-76 of the Prevent guidance are concerned specifically with schools.

⁵ [The Prevent duty – departmental advice for schools and childcare providers, June 2015](#)

Due to the context and venues in which our organisation operate we recognise that 'Spiritual abuse' is also a type of abuse which our young people could be exposed to. Acorn AP will provide advice and guidance to our staff to safeguard against this and recognise the signs of it. This is not a separate category of abuse but is a form of psychological and emotional abuse. It is important when discussing such cases with statutory agencies that we are clear that spiritual abuse is a form of psychological and emotional abuse within a religious context

Groups of students particularly at risk

All students attending Acorn AP can be described as vulnerable, due to a range of factors that have contributed to, or come about as a result of them struggling in mainstream schools. Because of this, workers must be particularly vigilant in recognising and responding to potential indicators of abuse in all students. Workers should exercise professional curiosity whenever there are changes in behaviour or circumstances come to light that, although innocent in appearance, could be indicators of safeguarding issues below the surface. All concerns, however small or unsubstantiated, should be logged on CPOMs.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

In addition, we understand that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration.
- Children with SEND and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Children requiring mental health support

Acorn AP has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Trauma informed training is in place to help all Acorn AP workers recognise and respond to children in need of extra mental health support, including referring to external agencies.

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Referring schools and local authorities should always share the fact a child has a social worker, and the designated safeguarding lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare and support.

Looked After children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. It is vital that workers have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

Children missing from education

Acorn AP recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education including reporting the absence to the referring school or agency. Acorn AP's Absconders and children missing from education, home or care Policy gives further details of the procedures and duties for dealing with this issue.

Children with protected characteristics

Acorn AP recognises that a child who has a protected characteristic may be more at risk of harm and will take positive action to deal with the disadvantages these pupils may face.

Our approach to safeguarding

Training

The trustees are committed to initial and ongoing safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness that helps protect everyone.

All our workers will receive induction training that includes details of our safeguarding policy and procedures along with completing a recognised Level 2 safeguarding awareness course that they will refresh every 2 years. To ensure that our staff are aware of the developing risks online and are better equipped to keep our young people safe, all staff will undertake Artificial Intelligence and Safeguarding. Where workers have completed an appropriate course for another organisation, evidence of certification will be accepted. In addition to this training, there will be more regular updates via email and access to relevant additional courses and information on at least an annual basis. All staff in paid

roles working face-to-face with young people will complete PREVENT, FGM and Online Safety training. The designated safeguarding lead will ensure workers are aware of the early help process and the part they play in it.

In addition, the designated safeguarding lead and a deputy for each centre, will complete Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Lead training every two years.

The Safeguarding Lead for Acorn AP will be DSL trained and in addition, undertake additional training to enable them to fulfil their lead responsibility.

All trustees will complete Level 2 safeguarding awareness training at least every two years. The trustee with responsibility for safeguarding will undertake additional training to enable them to fulfil this role effectively.

Prevention – Safer recruitment

All recruiting managers and senior leaders have undertaken Safer Recruitment training, which is refreshed every 5 years.

Our recruitment practices follow statutory requirements for schools, as set out in DfE guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education. Trustees ensure that all workers (including volunteers) have been recruited and appropriately checked taking account of this guidance.

The recruitment process includes:

- All recruitment materials include reference to Acorn AP's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils.
- Written job descriptions/person specifications for the post
- Application form, which is scrutinised carefully and includes safeguarding statements
- Shortlisting and self-declarations requested from shortlisted candidates
- Scrutiny of employment history, including gaps
- Shortlisted candidates informed that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks
- Suitable references taken including questions to confirm suitability to work with children
- Two-stage interview process that includes safeguarding and suitability questioning and observations of teaching and/or interaction with pupils
- Pre-appointment checks, including:
 - ID
 - Enhanced DBS (including children's barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children)
 - Physical and mental fitness for the role
 - Right to work in the UK
 - Overseas checks (where the person has lived or worked outside the UK)
 - Verifying professional qualifications (where appropriate)
 - Prohibition from teaching

- Section 128 (for manager, leadership team and trustee roles only)
- Online searches undertaken on shortlisted candidates.
- A suitable induction programme is provided for the successful applicant, which includes safeguarding policy and processes.
- The successful applicant is required to complete a probationary period.

Agency and third-party staff

Acorn AP will obtain written notification from any agency or third party, that they have carried out the same checks as we would perform for our own workers, in respect of any adults working at Acorn AP that are employed by them.

Single Central Register

Acorn AP maintains a Single Central Register (SCR) detailing suitability checks (pre-recruitment and ongoing) on all workers, trustees and any other adults who may regularly come into unsupervised contact with young people in Acorn AP Centres.

Management of workers – Code of conduct

Workers are required to demonstrate high standards in their exercise of authority, management of risk, the proper use of resources and in the active protection of children and young people from discrimination and avoidable harm. All workers are required to adhere to Acorn AP's Worker's Code of Conduct, which has been drawn up to assist staff in maintaining entirely proper and professional relationships with young people. It attempts to provide a clear and unambiguous picture of the boundaries associated with worker roles and the use of power and authority. As well as protecting the children and young people we come into contact with, the code of conduct will help workers avoid situations that might lead to allegations against them.

The code of conduct applies in a context where any of the following are true:

- a child or young person is currently placed at Acorn AP;
- a child or young person was formerly placed at Acorn AP and is still under the age of 19;
- a child or young person is a current or former student under the age of 19, attending non-Acorn AP activities (such as youth group organised together with the Partner Organisation or church).

Responding to disclosures and concerns

All workers should be aware of the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of these and specific safeguarding issues, such as child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation, so that workers are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help, or protection.

Workers at Acorn AP deliberately take time to observe and get to know our students. We develop trust and build relationships creating an environment where students know they can talk to workers about any concerns they have. Posters around the Centre reinforce this. In addition to speaking to workers, students or their parents/carers can report any concerns through the Acorn AP website contact us section.

Workers are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, workers should always act in the best interests of the child.

When worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance; or a child tells a worker about possible abuse, workers will:

- Initially talk to the child/young person about what they are observing.
- Ask open questions, for example, "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today – is everything okay?", but never use leading questions.
- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously.
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child/young person makes a disclosure.
- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will be handled with an appropriate level of confidentiality but will have to be shared with certain other professionals.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Procedure

For all safeguarding disclosures or concerns, workers must speak to the centre-based DSL or their deputy if the DSL is not available (contact details in Appendix A).

If the child is in immediate danger or risk of harm, a referral MUST be made to children's social care and where appropriate, to the police, IMMEDIATELY.

If the child is not in immediate danger or risk of harm, staff can:

- Seek advice from the centre-based DSL, deputy, or Acorn AP safeguarding lead (contact details in Appendix A).
- Refer to local thresholds for referrals and early help, provided by the local safeguarding partnership. Thresholds from local safeguarding partnerships can be found on their websites (local links in Appendix A).
- Contact the local service desk to obtain advice (contact numbers in Appendix A).

Local procedures for making referrals to Children's Social Care can be found on the local safeguarding partnerships websites (local links in Appendix A). Workers should provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm.

All concerns and disclosures must be recorded on CPOMS (see below).

The child's wishes

Where there is a safeguarding concern, workers should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account, when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Pupils must be given opportunities to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Early Help

Any child may benefit from early help, but Acorn AP workers should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- is seeing/hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships

If early help is appropriate the DSL should liaise with other agencies and set up an inter-agency assessments, as appropriate. The case should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving.

Recording, reporting and managing confidential information

Using CPOMS to log an incident

Completing the incident

The person who receives an allegation or disclosure, or has a concern, should complete an Incident form on CPOMS. All concerns, discussions, decisions, follow-up, actions and outcomes, including the reasons for those decisions and actions taken should be recorded in full, including full names, dates, times and locations. If in doubt about recording requirements workers should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead.

If a referral has been made to children's social care, workers should note down the name and contact number of the social worker receiving the referral. Copies of the referral documents should be uploaded to the Incident form.

Any other or subsequent documents relating to the concern should also be uploaded in order that all documentation relating to that incident are kept securely and electronically in the same place. Any paper-based documentation should be scanned, uploaded and then shredded.

If third party organisations / agencies / partners, including the referring school agree to certain actions, these should be noted on a linked Actions form in order that Acorn AP workers can check these actions have been completed and record and consider the outcome.

Review dates

If the issue is un-resolved, or there are incomplete actions relating to a concern, a review date should be set which reflects the shortest timescale within which progress against the case/actions can be further evaluated and recorded or updated. CPOMS will send a reminder email to all workers concerned when a review is due and workers are expected to review all cases in line with these dates.

Updating the Incident form

Workers should update the initial Incident form to reflect all further information that comes to light or actions taken in relation to the initial concern raised. When viewing an incident, CPOMS displays the most recent version of what has been logged, whilst maintaining a version history of all previous entries made, so as not to overwrite any information that later may be required in an investigation or in court.

Notifications to DSL and senior leadership

Whenever a form is first submitted or updated, CPOMS will send an automated email notification to all those with DSL responsibility for the centre where the concern has been raised, including the Acorn AP safeguarding lead. This allows leaders to quickly assess whether the actions taken by centre-based workers and the centre-based DSL are sufficient and to provide further advice and guidance and support where needed.

Logging subsequent concerns

Once an incident has been marked as 'complete', if a subsequent incident with either a similar or different nature comes to light, a new Incident form should be used to log that incident. CPOMS will display all incidents relating to one child alongside each other, in order that workers can easily spot and respond to any emerging patterns.

Managing confidentiality

Acorn AP is committed to managing confidential information safely. We recognise that all children and young people have a right to confidentiality. Specific information relating to safeguarding concerns will only be shared with other workers on a 'need to know' basis. Unless specified by the worker recording the concern (e.g. in the case of an

allegation being made against a worker to whom records would normally be visible to), the details of any incidents on CPOMS are only visible to the worker who recorded the concern, DSLs within the Centre and Acorn AP's safeguarding lead.

Safeguarding concerns or allegations of abuse made against workers

Full details can be found in the Acorn AP policy – Dealing with concerns and allegations against workers and trustees.

These procedures apply to all workers, whether teaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to sessional or supply staff and volunteers. It also applies to trustees.

These procedures should be used in respect of all cases where there is a safeguarding concern or in which it is alleged that a worker or trustee 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 he or she 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.

These procedures relate to current workers and trustees regardless of whether Acorn AP is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against former workers or trustees should be referred to the police.

Workers are encouraged to share with their manager any low-level concerns they have about another worker in the centre. This includes where the individual's conduct:

- is inconsistent with the workers code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold (set out in bullet points above) or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

This will allow managers to address any unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage.

Workers can also raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime. These concerns should be raised in the first instance with the worker's manager or if appropriate, the Acorn AP safeguarding lead. Acorn AP's Whistleblowing Policy outlines the procedures that should take place where such concerns exist.

Confidentiality

It is extremely important that when an allegation is made, Acorn AP makes every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Ways young people can report concerns about workers

Young people can report concerns directly to a member of staff in the Centre. If they are not comfortable doing that (e.g. if their concern is about the DSL in the Centre) they can:

- Contact the Chair of Trustees directly (contact details available on posters displayed in Centre)
- Contact the Acorn AP Safeguarding Lead via a link on the Acorn AP SharePoint
- Contact Acorn AP Head office using the website Contact Form.

Receiving an allegation from a Child

A worker who receives an allegation about another worker from a child should follow the guidelines in the section above – Responding to disclosures and concerns.

In addition, the following should also take place:

- The worker must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The allegation is then to be reported immediately to the DSL, who will notify the Acorn AP safeguarding lead. If the DSL is the person against whom the allegation is made, the worker should report the case directly to the Acorn AP safeguarding lead. The Acorn AP safeguarding lead will take the role of 'case manager'.
- The case manager will immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who will advise and agree a course of action from there. In the event of an immediate risk to children or where there is evidence of a possible criminal offence, the case manager may want to involve the police.
- Using the incident form on CPOMS, the individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The case manager can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social care.

From here, please refer to the full details of the procedure the Acorn AP safeguarding lead will follow in the Acorn AP policy – Dealing with concerns and allegations against workers and trustees.

Working in partnership

Information sharing

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Educational establishments have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. Workers should follow local processes and use local referral forms when making referrals or reports to Children's Services, Channel, the Police and other agencies.

Multi agency

Acorn AP workers have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Workers should contribute fully to multi-agency working in line with

statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*⁶. All workers should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

The Local Safeguarding Partnership will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. The DSLs should make themselves aware of and follow local arrangements.

Escalating when information or action is not forthcoming

Workers should follow up with children's social care if they do not inform you within one working day, of the course of action they are taking. If you are not satisfied with this decision, or if after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. This action should be logged on CPOMS. Support with this is available from the Acorn AP safeguarding lead.

Transfer of SG file

When a student returns to their referring school or moves onto another school or provision, the DSL is responsible for ensuring that their safeguarding records are transferred securely to the DSL at the new establishment. If sent electronically, the PDF must be sent to a named individual's school email address and not to a generic mailbox (e.g. info@schoolname) with password protection on the attachment or through encrypted file transfer on the CPOMS system. Alternatively, the records can be printed, marked as confidential, securely delivered and signed for by the DSL at the returning school.

Use of the shared premises for non-Acorn activities

As most of our centres are hosted in multiuse venues there will be an agreement in place between Acorn AP and the building owner that upon any safeguarding allegation received, Acorn AP will follow our own safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO should they receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the premises for the purposes of running any activities for children.

Online Safety

Acorn AP recognises that it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. In response to this, we are committed to:

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

- Ensuring a whole organisation approach to online safety that protects and educates both staff and students in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate concerns where possible.
- Ensuring awareness of the dangers amongst both staff and students and having policies and procedures in place to address all areas of risk.
- Where children are being asked to learn online at home, to have regard to the DfE advice regarding remote education as well as advice provided by the NSPCC and PSHE Association, as reflected on the Online Safety and Acceptable Use of Technology policy.
- For each centre to have appropriate filtering and monitoring technology on all devices used by staff and students in centre, and for the effectiveness of this to be regularly reviewed by the trustees and fully understood by the centre teams
- For each centre to have appropriate levels of e-security / cybersecurity protection procedures in place for staff and students and for these to be regularly reviewed in order to keep up with changes in the sector.
- For all aspects of online safety to be regularly reviewed in order to keep up with the latest changes to technology, risk and potential harm in this rapidly evolving sector.

Data protection

Workers should have due regard to relevant data protection principles for sharing and withholding personal information as set out in the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. This includes knowing what information they can store and share when they are 'safeguarding children and individuals at risk', including 'special category personal data' and when personal data should be withheld where the 'serious harm test' is met. All workers have school-specific GDPR training and should refer any questions to the Acorn AP data protection officer.

Retention of child protection information

Child protection records (i.e. incident logs) should be kept until the pupil is 25 years old. For children who are Looked After, information should be kept until they are 75 years old. Within this time, information relating to incidents must not be removed from the archives on the CPOMS system, in order that it could be provided if a case were to go to an inquiry. If/when the CPOMS system is replaced, all safeguarding records must be extracted for secure archiving or transferred to a new system.

Organisations have a duty to keep any records that could be needed by an official inquiry. Insurers may require information to be kept for longer, therefore please refer to Acorn AP's Retention Policy.

Any safeguarding information that is paper-based must be scanned and uploaded to the pupil's file on CPOMS or Arbor. Paperwork must then be securely destroyed immediately.

Disseminating/reviewing policies and procedures

The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually. Any changes/amendments will be shared with workers and where significant changes appear, these will be relayed to

parents/carers. Where possible, parents/carers and young people will be involved in the review process.

All workers have an opportunity to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and policy through regular staff meetings and training. Centre-based DSLs should report any deficiencies in procedure or policy identified by the Local Safeguarding Partners (or others) to the Acorn AP Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity.

Where an allegation has been made against a worker, Acorn AP's safeguarding lead should, at the conclusion of the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether there are any matters arising from it that could lead to the improvement of Acorn AP's procedures and/or policies and/or which should be drawn to the attention of the Local Safeguarding Partners.

Lessons learned procedure

There will be a standing SG item at all trustees' meeting agendas. This will include a 'lessons learned'. The Organisations SG lead will compile a list of lessons learned, which will feed into SG practice at Acorn AP and be added to each revision of this policy. This will include 'low-level' as well as more significant lessons.

Appendix A – Safeguarding contact information

Central Contacts:

<i>Acorn AP Safeguarding Lead:</i>	Andy Moughtin 07985 114 266 andy.moughtin@acornap.org.uk
<i>Acorn AP Chair of Trustees:</i>	Scott Halligan 07754 463 473 chairoftrustees@acornap.org.uk
<i>Acorn AP Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding:</i>	Scott Halligan 07754 463 473 safeguardingtrustee@acornap.org.uk

Local Centre Information:

Acorn Alternative Provision, Normanton

Parish Rooms, All Saints' Parish Church, Snyderdale Road, Normanton, WF6 1NT

<i>Centre-based Designated Safeguarding Lead:</i>	Gavin Budby
<i>Centre-based Deputy DSL:</i>	Emily Jo Brown
<i>Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Website:</i>	https://www.wakefieldscp.org.uk/
<i>Children's Social Care duty desk contact details:</i>	Wakefield, Social Care Direct 0345 8503 503
<i>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):</i>	Marie Pettman Complete a referral form and email to lado.referrals@wakefield.gov.uk
<i>Channel referral contact details:</i>	Email Prevent Referral Form to wakefieldpreventreferrals@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk Council Prevent Team 01924 306645 CTU 07789 753634 or 07590 357469

Acorn Alternative Provision, Torbay

St Marychurch Road, Castle Circus, Torquay, Devon, TQ1 3HY

<i>Centre-based Designated Safeguarding Lead:</i>	Sharon Chapman
<i>Centre-based Deputy DSL:</i>	Nathan Chant
<i>Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Website:</i>	http://torbaysafeguarding.org.uk/
<i>Children's Social Care duty desk contact details:</i>	
<i>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):</i>	Torbay- 01803 208 541 Mob- 07920247310 cpunit@torbay.gov.uk Devon – For any requests for advice, please complete the notification form or telephone 01392 384964 or email childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficers@devon.gov.uk for a notification form.
<i>Channel referral contact details:</i>	Torbay's Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 01803 208 100 Out of hours 0300 4564 876 The Prevent Team Telephone: 01392 225130 or 0800 789 321.

	Email: prevent@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk
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Acorn Alternative Provision, Exeter

Belmont Exeter, Western Way, Exeter, EX1 2DB

<i>Centre-based Designated Safeguarding Lead:</i>	Kay Thompson
<i>Centre-based Deputy DSL:</i>	Kyra Morley
<i>Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Website:</i>	https://www.devonscp.org.uk/
<i>Children's Social Care duty desk contact details:</i>	MASH Front Door – 0345 155 1071 (Mon–Thur, 9am – 5pm; Fri, 9am – 4pm) Out of hours Emergency Duty Service – 0345 6000 388
<i>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):</i>	Contact details and process can be found here Managing allegations – Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership (devonscp.org.uk) For advice from the LADO, either complete the LADO contact form, leave a message on 01392 384964 or email childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk.
<i>Channel referral contact details:</i>	Anti-terrorist Hotline 0800 789 321 Email: prevent@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk

Acorn Alternative Provision, Tendring

Acorn Alternative Provision, Tendring, Frinton Free Church, Connaught Avenue, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex, CO13 9PW

<i>Centre-based Designated Safeguarding Lead:</i>	Ben Pratt
<i>Centre-based Deputy DSL:</i>	TBC
<i>Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Website:</i>	https://www.escb.co.uk/
<i>Children's Social Care duty desk contact details:</i>	Children and Families Hub (Priority Line) 0345 603 7627 0345 606 1212 Emergency.DutyTeamOutOfHours@essex.gov.uk
<i>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):</i>	03330 139 797
<i>Channel referral contact details:</i>	Essex Police Prevent team prevent@essex.pnn.police.uk 01245 452196