

ABODE EDUCATION

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Alternative Provision – London & Outer London

1. Introduction

Abode Education is an Alternative Provision (AP) provider delivering educational, mentoring and wellbeing services to children and young people across London and outer London boroughs.

We work with learners who may be at risk of exclusion, have EHCPs, SEMH needs, social care involvement, trauma backgrounds or other vulnerabilities.

Delivery may take place in learners' homes, community venues, partner schools, or online via approved platforms.

Abode Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This policy is written in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), the Children Act 1989 & 2004, Education Act 2002, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, and the Care Act 2014 (where applicable).

2. Safeguarding Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children have the right to protection from harm.
- Safeguarding applies to all learners regardless of background.
- Many learners in Alternative Provision require enhanced safeguarding vigilance.
- We adopt a trauma-informed and contextual safeguarding approach.

3. Types of Abuse

Staff are trained to recognise:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect



- Child-on-child abuse
- Sexual violence and harassment
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE) including county lines
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Online abuse
- Domestic abuse exposure
- Serious youth violence
- Forced marriage and FGM

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Abode Education appoints a trained DSL and Deputy DSL.

The DSL:

- Takes overall safeguarding responsibility
- Is trained every two years minimum
- Receives annual updates
- Is Prevent trained
- Manages referrals to Children's Social Care
- Liaises with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Maintains secure safeguarding records

5. Reporting Concerns

All staff must:

- Act immediately if a child is at risk of immediate harm (call 999 if required)
- Report concerns to the DSL the same day
- Record concerns in writing
- Never investigate concerns themselves
- Maintain confidentiality

The DSL will assess, refer, and escalate concerns in line with local safeguarding partnership procedures.

6. Alternative Provision Safeguarding Controls

- Individual risk assessments completed prior to placement
- Behaviour and safeguarding risks reviewed
- Lone working protocols followed
- Home visit risk assessments completed
- Community venues assessed for safeguarding suitability

7. Online Safety

- Only approved platforms used
- Staff use organisational accounts only
- No personal social media contact
- Professional environments maintained
- Recording only with authorisation

8. Safer Recruitment

- Enhanced DBS with barred list check
- Identity and right to work checks
- Two references obtained before start
- Prohibition and Section 128 checks where applicable
- Safeguarding induction before working with learners

9. Managing Allegations Against Staff

- Immediate notification to senior leadership
- Referral to LADO
- No internal investigation before LADO advice
- Suspension considered where appropriate
- Confidential handling of allegations

10. Prevent Duty

Abode Education complies with the Prevent Duty. Staff are trained to recognise radicalisation risks and make appropriate referrals through Channel where required.

11. Information Sharing & Record Keeping

- Records stored securely
- Access restricted to authorised personnel
- Information shared lawfully under safeguarding exemptions
- Records retained in line with statutory guidance

12. Partnership Working

We work collaboratively with Local Authorities, Early Help teams, schools, health professionals, police, and youth services across London and outer London boroughs.

13. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually or following any serious safeguarding incident.

Signed:

Nana Otchere
Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date of Review: 17 January 2026
Next Review Due: January 2027