

Woodland Pathways

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Safer Programme aligned • incorporating Online Safety & Use of Technology

Document status

Date revised: 01 September 2026

Effective for the 2026/27 academic year

Next formal review: August 2027, or sooner if guidance, legislation, local procedures or practice change.

This policy has been structured around the Safer Programme Version 15 safeguarding template and personalised for Woodland Pathways as an alternative provision.

SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS – PAGE 1

Lead Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Tom Underwood – Co-Director of Wellbeing & Safeguarding

Deputy DSLs: Emma Hatfield – Co-Director of Education; Andy Ralls – Co-Director of Outdoor Learning

Woodland Pathways safeguarding contact: 07809225779 • office@woodlandpathways.uk

Available during provision/operational hours. If the DSL team cannot be contacted and a child may be at risk, staff must not delay: contact Norfolk CADS on 0344 800 8021. In an emergency call 999.

Parents/members of the public: Norfolk Children's Services 0344 800 8020.

How this policy is constructed

Woodland Pathways has retained its child-centred, trauma-informed and relational safeguarding approach while adopting the full heading structure required by the Safer Programme template. Because Woodland Pathways is an education and alternative provision, the term Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is used throughout. The policy should be read alongside the separate Online Safety Policy, Practitioner Code of Conduct, Safer Recruitment Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Behaviour & Relationships Policy, Lone Working Policy and Practitioner Induction documentation.

Section 1. Introduction – Aim and Ethos

Woodland Pathways Ltd provides personalised alternative education for children and young people, including learners with SEND, SEMH needs, anxiety, trauma-related needs, disrupted education and Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) arrangements. Learning may take place on our woodland site, outdoors, in the community and off-site.

This policy sets out our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that all children have the right to feel safe, be heard, be respected and receive help when they need it.

Our safeguarding culture is child-centred, trauma-informed, relational, vigilant and professionally curious. We work on the basis that 'it could happen here' and that behaviour, changes in presentation, attendance, communication or engagement may be indicators of unmet need, distress, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

- protect children from maltreatment, abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- prevent impairment of children's physical and mental health or development;
- provide safe and effective care and learning environments;
- take action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes;
- promote emotional safety, dignity, inclusion, belonging and respectful relationships;
- adapt safeguarding communication and responses for SEND, communication needs and neurodivergence.

This policy applies to all learners, practitioners, directors, volunteers, contractors, visitors and any adult working on behalf of Woodland Pathways.

This policy is published as part of the Woodland Pathways recruitment information pack and is available to applicants before appointment. Successful applicants receive the current policy and safeguarding procedures during induction.

Section 2. Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSLs

The safeguarding contacts box at the front of this policy must be readily available to all practitioners, volunteers, visitors, learners and parents/carers.

- Lead DSL: Tom Underwood – Co-Director of Wellbeing & Safeguarding.
- Deputy DSL: Emma Hatfield – Co-Director of Education.
- Deputy DSL: Andy Ralls – Co-Director of Outdoor Learning.
- Main safeguarding contact: 07809225779 / office@woodlandpathways.uk.
- If the DSL/Deputies are unavailable, anyone with a safeguarding concern may contact Norfolk CADS directly on 0344 800 8021. Parents/members of the public may contact Children's Services on 0344 800 8020. In an emergency call 999.

Safeguarding concerns should not be sent only by email where delay could increase risk. Urgent concerns must be raised verbally with a DSL/Deputy DSL or directly with statutory services.

Section 3. Roles and Responsibilities of the DSL

- Act as the named point for safeguarding concerns and ensure concerns are acted upon promptly.
- Liaise with Children's Services, CADS, Police, LADO, commissioning schools/local authorities, health and other agencies.
- Make or support referrals and ensure appropriate escalation where concerns remain.
- Maintain secure, accurate safeguarding records and a clear chronology of actions and decisions.
- Ensure this policy is reviewed at least annually and updated following national/local changes or learning from incidents.
- Ensure practitioners, volunteers, visitors and parents/carers understand relevant safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure safer recruitment, induction, safeguarding training and ongoing updates are implemented.
- Promote the Norfolk Continuum of Needs and appropriate early/family help pathways.

- Lead online safety and technology safeguarding arrangements, review incidents and ensure learning is embedded.
- Monitor patterns, themes and emerging risks across learners, including attendance, exploitation, online harms and contextual risks.
- Ensure safeguarding leadership is available whenever provision is operating.

Section 4. Safer Working Practices for Staff and Volunteers

Woodland Pathways follows safer working practices designed to protect children and adults. The Practitioner Code of Conduct and Guidance for Safer Working Practice are integral to these arrangements.

4.1 Policy awareness and professional conduct

- All practitioners and volunteers receive safeguarding information during induction and sign to confirm they have read and will follow required policies and the Practitioner Code of Conduct.
- Updates are communicated through safeguarding briefings, supervision, training and policy re-acknowledgement where appropriate.
- Adults must maintain professional boundaries, use respectful language, avoid favouritism and over-familiarity, and work transparently.
- Low-level concerns about adult conduct must be shared rather than minimised.

4.2 Safer recruitment and DBS

- Roles are supported by clear role information and safeguarding expectations.
- Identity, right to work, qualifications where relevant, references and employment/experience information are checked.
- Interviews explore suitability to work with children and safeguarding understanding.
- The correct level of Enhanced DBS and Children's Barred List check is obtained where the role is eligible and regulated activity applies.
- The Single Central Record is maintained. DBS Update Service status may be checked where a practitioner has subscribed and consented.
- Any concern arising from recruitment checks is considered through a safeguarding risk and suitability lens before deployment.

4.3 Induction and training

- Core safeguarding, health and safety and site induction is completed before unsupervised work with learners.
- Practitioners meet with the Lead DSL or an appropriate Deputy DSL to understand recording and reporting procedures.
- Safeguarding training is refreshed at least every three years as a minimum, with regular updates between formal training.
- KCSIE Part One is read by all Practitioners and acknowledged annually.
- Training includes online safety, child-on-child abuse, Prevent, exploitation, professional boundaries, whistleblowing, allegations and low-level concerns.
- First aid and role-specific training are maintained according to duties and risk.

4.4 Volunteers under 18

Woodland Pathways does not routinely use under-18s as volunteers. If this changes, an individual risk assessment, parental consent where appropriate, age-appropriate induction, supervision, insurance checks and a written role agreement will be completed. An under-18 volunteer will never be left alone to supervise learners or counted within adult supervision ratios.

Section 5. Procedure for Handling a Disclosure from a Child

If a child discloses abuse, neglect, exploitation or another safeguarding concern, the adult will:

1. Listen calmly and take the child seriously.
2. Be supportive and allow the child to speak without interruption.
3. Use only open, necessary clarification; do not interrogate, investigate, lead or put ideas into the child's head.
4. Never promise confidentiality. Explain that information must be shared with people who can help keep them safe.
5. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking.
6. Record the child's words as accurately as possible, including context, date, time and what happened immediately before the disclosure.
7. Sign/date the record and report immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
8. Take immediate protective action and contact statutory services/999 where delay would place a child at risk.

Practitioners must not investigate allegations themselves or confront an alleged perpetrator.

Section 6. Contacting the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS)

If there is an emergency or immediate danger, Woodland Pathways will call Police on 999.

Professionals will contact Norfolk CADS on 0344 800 8021 where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of harm or requires safeguarding advice. The caller will provide relevant child/family information, the nature and history of concerns, protective factors, action already taken and the child's current circumstances.

Where appropriate and safe, consent will be sought before sharing information. Consent is not required where seeking it may place a child or another person at increased risk, cause delay, prejudice a criminal investigation or where there is another lawful safeguarding basis to share.

Woodland Pathways will use the Norfolk Continuum of Needs and CADS professional flowchart to support decision-making. If a practitioner believes action is required and cannot reach a DSL, they may contact CADS directly. Safeguarding must never be delayed because a named person is unavailable.

6.1 Commissioner and Norfolk advisory notification routes

Safeguarding responsibility remains with Woodland Pathways and statutory referrals must never be delayed while another service is being informed. Where guidance or the commissioning arrangement requires the commissioner/advisory service to be notified, Woodland Pathways will also take the following action:

- Learner on a school roll – inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the home school and agree information-sharing/follow-up.
- Learner under the remit of Norfolk County Council Transitional Education Service (TES) – inform the relevant TES adviser/key contact for the placement.
- Looked After or Previously Looked After Child whose placement has been commissioned by Norfolk Virtual School – inform the relevant Virtual School adviser/key contact.
- Where another Norfolk County Council team has commissioned or is coordinating the placement, inform the named commissioner/key professional in accordance with the SLA/referral arrangements.
- If the concern indicates significant harm, immediate safeguarding risk or the need for statutory advice, CADS/Police are contacted regardless of the commissioning route.

The purpose of this parallel notification is to ensure the organisation holding wider educational/corporate responsibility for the learner is aware of the safeguarding issue, can coordinate information and can support any changes required to the placement or education plan. It does not replace a CADS, Police or LADO referral.

6.2 Prevent Duty – recognising concerns and making a referral

Concerns about radicalisation or extremist influence are treated as safeguarding concerns. The DSL will consider the Prevent/Channel pathway and seek advice from Norfolk Police Prevent where appropriate. Immediate risk is reported to Police.

Woodland Pathways treats susceptibility to radicalisation as a safeguarding concern. Practitioners should use a Notice – Check – Share approach: notice changes or indicators; check the concern with the DSL and relevant context; and share through the safeguarding pathway where concern remains.

- Practitioner records the concern factually and reports it promptly to the Lead DSL/Deputy DSL.
- The DSL considers the learner's circumstances, vulnerability, online/offline influences, immediacy of risk and whether another safeguarding pathway is also required.
- For a child or young person in Norfolk, the DSL follows normal safeguarding procedures and contacts CADS where safeguarding advice/action is required.
- Where concern remains that the learner may be susceptible to radicalisation, the DSL uses the current national/Norfolk Prevent referral process and referral form. The referral is made to the appropriate Prevent/Police pathway; current referral details are checked at the point of referral rather than relying on a historic email address printed in this policy.
- A Prevent referral is a request for safeguarding support, not an accusation or a criminal finding. The referral may be assessed for Channel or redirected to another more appropriate support route.
- Where there is immediate danger, suspected imminent terrorism-related activity or urgent risk to life, call Police on 999. For non-emergency terrorism concerns, follow current Police/Prevent reporting guidance.
- The DSL records the rationale, advice received, referral details, outcome and ongoing support. Woodland Pathways continues pastoral/educational support and works with relevant agencies and the commissioner.

6.3 How concerns are referred in Norfolk

For child protection or immediate safeguarding concerns, professionals contact CADS by telephone on 0344 800 8021. The current Norfolk process uses call options: 1 where the child/young person is already supported by a Social Worker or Family Practitioner; 2 for Child Exploitation; 3 for Domestic Abuse; and 0 for Child Protection/immediate safeguarding concerns. In an emergency call 999.

For early, emerging, complex or escalating needs that do not require an immediate child-protection response, Woodland Pathways will use the Norfolk Continuum of Needs and the current Norfolk Request for Support / Family Help pathway. Community-based support can also be identified through Best Start Family Hubs and the Norfolk Community Directory. The Community Directory is a signposting resource and is not a substitute for CADS where there is a safeguarding or child-protection concern.

Consent will normally be sought for Early Help/Family Help and for safeguarding referrals where appropriate. Consent is not required where seeking it may place the child or another person at increased risk of significant harm, cause unsafe delay, or undermine a criminal investigation. The reason for proceeding without consent will be recorded.

After contact/referral, the DSL records the advice, decision, outcome and agreed follow-up. If Woodland Pathways remains concerned that the response does not adequately address risk, the concern will be escalated through the appropriate professional disagreement/escalation route.

Section 7. Types of Abuse and Safeguarding Concerns

Practitioners are trained to recognise that abuse may occur within families, peer relationships, institutions, communities and online, and that children may not recognise or disclose what is happening.

7.1 Core categories

- Physical abuse – deliberately causing physical harm or injury.
- Emotional abuse – persistent emotional maltreatment that adversely affects emotional development.

- Sexual abuse – forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including non-contact and online activity.
- Neglect – persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to impair health or development.

7.2 Additional and contextual safeguarding concerns

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), including County Lines.
- Domestic abuse and children affected by domestic abuse as victims in their own right.
- Child-on-child abuse, including bullying, physical abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour and abuse within intimate relationships.
- Online abuse, cyberbullying, grooming, coercion, sexual exploitation, harmful content, intimate image abuse and AI-generated/deepfake sexual imagery.
- Radicalisation and extremist influence.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and so-called honour-based abuse.
- Mental health concerns where these indicate or increase safeguarding risk.
- Missing education, repeated absence, unexplained non-attendance or absconding.
- Trafficking, modern slavery and exploitation.
- Hate-based abuse, discrimination, misogyny and harmful behaviours linked to protected characteristics.
- Self-harm or suicidal ideation where safeguarding action or urgent support is required.

7.3 SEND, SEMH and communication vulnerability

Children with SEND, SEMH needs, communication differences or trauma histories may face additional barriers to recognising, reporting or being believed about abuse. Woodland Pathways will avoid assumptions that changes in behaviour are simply part of a child’s diagnosis or presentation, and will adapt communication and support.

Section 8. Managing Allegations Against People Working or Volunteering with Children

An allegation may relate to an adult who has harmed a child or may have harmed a child; may have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; may pose a risk of harm to children; or may have behaved in a way indicating they may not be suitable to work with children.

- The concern must be reported immediately to the Lead DSL/appropriate Director.
- Where the concern meets or may meet the harm threshold, Norfolk LADO will be contacted within one working day and the local procedure followed.
- No internal fact-finding investigation will take place before LADO advice where this could compromise the statutory process.
- Concerns about an adult in a position of trust who is not employed by Woodland Pathways will also be referred appropriately.
- If an allegation concerns the Lead DSL, it must be reported to another Director/Deputy DSL who will contact LADO.
- If an allegation concerns a Director, another Director not implicated in the concern will act and seek LADO advice.
- Children and adults involved will be supported while maintaining confidentiality and fairness.

Norfolk LADO: lado@norfolk.gov.uk. Emergency concerns must also be reported to Police/CADS as appropriate.

Section 9. Disciplinary Procedures Following an Allegation

Employment or disciplinary action will be considered separately from safeguarding and criminal processes and will follow advice from LADO, Police and other relevant professionals. Woodland Pathways will not compromise a safeguarding investigation through premature internal investigation.

- Temporary changes to duties or suspension will be considered only where necessary and proportionate to risk.

- Records will distinguish allegations, substantiated concerns, unsubstantiated concerns, unfounded concerns and malicious allegations in line with applicable guidance.
- Support will be offered to the child and to the adult subject to the allegation, without prejudicing the safeguarding process.
- Any disciplinary outcome will be informed by the evidence available and relevant employment procedures.

Section 10. Low-Level Concerns About Adults

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Practitioner Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work, but which does not meet the harm threshold.

- Examples include over-familiarity, favouritism, inappropriate communication, boundary concerns, humiliating or intimidating behaviour, or inappropriate use of technology.
- All low-level concerns, including self-referrals, should be shared promptly with the Lead DSL or appropriate Director.
- Concerns will be recorded, reviewed for patterns and managed proportionately.
- Where a pattern or additional information indicates the harm threshold may be met, LADO advice will be sought.
- The purpose is an open, transparent culture in which concerns are addressed early and professional boundaries are clear.

Section 11. Making a Barring Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service

Woodland Pathways will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where the legal referral conditions are met, including where a person has been removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not resigned or otherwise left, because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child.

The Directors are responsible for ensuring any required DBS referral is made. If the concern relates to the Director who would normally coordinate the referral, another Director not implicated in the concern will take responsibility.

Woodland Pathways may also provide information to DBS where a safeguarding referral is considered appropriate even if the mandatory referral threshold is not clearly met, having regard to relevant law and professional advice.

Section 12. Working with Parents and Carers

Woodland Pathways values parents and carers as safeguarding partners. Parents/carers will be informed how to access this policy and who the DSL team are through induction/admission information, the Parent/Carer Handbook and direct communication.

- Parents/carers are informed that Woodland Pathways has a legal and professional duty to assist safeguarding enquiries and may contact CADS, Police, commissioners or other agencies where there are concerns about a child.
- Where possible and safe, we will work openly with parents/carers and explain concerns and actions.
- We may share information without parental consent where there are serious concerns about harm or likely harm, where seeking consent could increase risk, or where another lawful safeguarding basis applies.
- Parents/carers are expected to follow the Woodland Pathways Parent & Carer Code of Conduct and to raise concerns respectfully through appropriate channels.
- Where concerns involve a parent/carer, decisions about communication will be led by the child's safety and statutory advice.

Section 13. Records and Confidentiality

Woodland Pathways cannot promise absolute confidentiality where there is a safeguarding concern. Information is shared on a lawful, proportionate and need-to-know basis to protect children.

- Safeguarding concerns and disclosures are recorded factually, promptly, dated and timed.

- The child's own words are recorded where relevant and professional opinion is clearly distinguished from fact.
- Actions, decisions, consultations, referrals and outcomes are logged to provide a clear chronology.
- Safeguarding records are stored securely with access restricted to the DSL team and authorised persons who require access for safeguarding purposes.
- Safeguarding information is kept separate from routine learner records where appropriate and transferred securely when responsibility for the child changes.
- Data protection law does not prevent information sharing for safeguarding. The welfare and safety of the child are central to decisions.

Section 14. Online Safety and Use of Technology

Woodland Pathways recognises that technology provides valuable learning, communication and creative opportunities but can also facilitate abuse, exploitation, bullying, coercion, harmful content, radicalisation, fraud, privacy breaches and unsafe relationships. Online safety is therefore an integral part of safeguarding.

14.1 Leadership and responsibility

- The Lead DSL has overall safeguarding oversight of online safety, supported by Deputy DSLs.
- Online incidents are reported through the same safeguarding routes as offline concerns and are recorded using the Online Safety Incident Reporting Form where appropriate.
- Patterns in online incidents are reviewed to inform risk assessment, education, policy and Practitioner practice.

14.2 Staff and volunteer acceptable use

- All practitioners and volunteers must read, understand and sign the Woodland Pathways Online Acceptable Use Agreement during induction.
- Professional communication must use agreed Woodland Pathways systems. Personal social media accounts must not be used to communicate with learners.
- Staff must not accept or initiate social media connections with learners and must protect personal online information and professional boundaries.
- Illegal, harmful, abusive or inappropriate online content or incidents must be reported immediately.
- Personal data must remain confidential and secure, subject to lawful safeguarding information sharing.

14.3 Personal mobile phones and smart technology

Because Woodland Pathways operates outdoors and off-site, practitioners may need access to a mobile telephone for emergency communication, lone-working safety, navigation or operational contact. This is a controlled exception and not permission for unrestricted personal use.

- Personal phones must remain on silent and must not be used for personal messaging/social media while supervising learners except during agreed breaks away from learners.
- Personal devices must never be used to photograph or video learners.
- Where a device is required for work communication, only agreed professional channels may be used and no learner-sensitive information should be retained unnecessarily on a personal device.
- Smart watches with cameras or recording capability must not be used to capture learners. Notifications and non-essential functions should be disabled while working directly with learners.
- Visitors and parents/carers must not photograph, film or record learners other than their own child without explicit permission.
- Learner mobile phone arrangements will be individualised according to age, risk, need, educational purpose and commissioner/parent agreements. Devices may be held securely where their use creates a safeguarding or learning risk.

14.4 Images, video and digital media

- Written consent is obtained for photography/video according to Woodland Pathways consent arrangements.
- Images of learners are taken only on organisation-approved equipment or approved systems.
- Images are stored securely, used only for agreed educational, evidential or communication purposes and retained/deleted in accordance with data protection arrangements.
- Images are never posted to personal accounts or shared informally.
- Where a child withdraws assent in the moment, practitioners will consider the child's wishes even where parental consent exists.

14.5 Internet access, filtering and monitoring

- Internet-enabled activity is supervised according to learner age, vulnerability, purpose and risk.
- Wi-Fi and organisation devices are password protected and kept updated with appropriate security controls.
- Filtering and monitoring arrangements are reviewed for suitability to the provision and the technology actually used.
- Practitioners remain responsible for active supervision; filtering is not treated as a substitute for professional vigilance.
- Attempts to bypass controls, access harmful content or use technology in a way that creates risk are recorded and addressed.

14.6 Online communication, gaming and social media

- Learners are supported to understand privacy, consent, respectful communication, misinformation, scams, grooming, cyberbullying and harmful content.
- Online gaming, messaging and social platforms are considered in risk assessment where relevant to a learner's presentation or safeguarding needs.
- Practitioners will not use closed/private personal messaging with learners outside agreed organisational systems.
- Any sexual, threatening, exploitative, hateful or extremist content is treated as a safeguarding matter.

14.7 Artificial intelligence, deepfakes and emerging technology

- AI tools may only be used for legitimate educational or organisational purposes and in ways that protect personal and safeguarding data.
- Learner-identifiable or sensitive safeguarding information must not be entered into public generative-AI systems unless an explicitly approved secure system and lawful basis are in place.
- AI-generated intimate or sexualised images, deepfakes, impersonation, harassment or coercive use of AI are treated as safeguarding concerns.
- Learners will be supported to understand that AI-generated content may be inaccurate, manipulative or harmful and that apparently realistic images/audio/video may be fabricated.

14.8 Responding to online abuse

- Immediate danger: call 999.
- Significant safeguarding concern: contact CADS on 0344 800 8021.
- Online sexual abuse/grooming may also be reported to CEOP.
- Criminal sexual imagery may be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation.
- Children may be supported to use Childline/Internet Watch Foundation Report Remove for sexual images of themselves.
- Terrorist/extremist content may be reported through the appropriate national reporting route; hate content may be reported through the relevant platform/police route.
- Evidence should be preserved safely without practitioners unnecessarily viewing, copying or forwarding illegal or harmful imagery.

Section 15. Relevant Guidance and Legislation

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 until 31 August 2026; KCSIE 2026 from 1 September 2026.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current statutory guidance).
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.
- Education Act 2002, where applicable to education safeguarding duties.
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and Prevent Duty guidance.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.
- Online Safety Act 2023.
- Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, Norfolk Continuum of Needs and local LADO/CADS procedures.
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings.
- Statutory mobile phone guidance applying to schools from September 2026 is considered where relevant to Woodland Pathways' education context; Woodland Pathways applies proportionate controls reflecting its outdoor, community and emergency-communication needs.

Section 16. Other Relevant Woodland Pathways Policies and Procedures

- Practitioner Code of Conduct
- Parent & Carer Code of Conduct
- Practitioner Induction Policy and Checklist
- Safer Recruitment Policy and Single Central Record procedures
- Online Safety Policy and Online Acceptable Use Agreement
- Online Safety Incident Reporting Form
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Behaviour, Self-Esteem & Positive Relationships Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy and activity-specific risk assessments
- Health & Safety Policy
- First Aid / Medical Needs procedures
- Absconding / Missing Learner Policy
- Data Protection / Confidentiality / Information Sharing procedures
- Visitor arrangements and Emergency Procedures

Section 17. Useful Contacts

Service	Contact
Woodland Pathways safeguarding contact	07809225779 • office@woodlandpathways.uk
Norfolk CADS – professionals	0344 800 8021
Norfolk Children's Services – parents/public / out of hours route	0344 800 8020
Police	999 emergency • 101 non-emergency
Norfolk LADO	lado@norfolk.gov.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285
Safer Programme	01603 228966 • safer@norfolk.gov.uk
Childline	0800 1111
Norfolk Community Directory	communitydirectory.norfolk.gov.uk – community services and support signposting (not an emergency safeguarding referral route)

Norfolk Virtual School	virtual.schools@norfolk.gov.uk • 01603 303323 – use the relevant adviser/key contact where the placement is commissioned by the Virtual School
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Section 18. Policy Review, Approval and Quality Assurance

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are changes to legislation, KCSIE, Working Together, Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, commissioner requirements, technology risks, learning from incidents, complaints, allegations, online safety incidents or safeguarding audit findings.

Safeguarding quality assurance includes review of training, induction, safeguarding records, incident themes, online safety logs, safer recruitment evidence, risk assessments, commissioner feedback and the effectiveness of actions taken.

The Directors are responsible for approving and implementing this policy and ensuring that Practitioners understand changes.

Approved by: Woodland Pathways Board of Directors

Lead policy owner: Co-Director of Wellbeing & Safeguarding / Lead DSL

Signature: TRU Date: 01/09/2026

Next review due: August 2027, or sooner if guidance or local procedures change, or sooner if guidance or local procedures change

Appendix 1 – Prevent Duty and Radicalisation Procedure

Prevent is part of the UK counter-terrorism strategy and aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Radicalisation may occur online or offline and may involve grooming, isolation, grievance, identity needs or exposure to extremist narratives.

- Record and report concerns promptly to the DSL/Deputy DSL.
- Do not investigate or challenge a child in a way that increases risk.
- The DSL will consider the child's circumstances, vulnerability and immediacy of risk and consult relevant Norfolk Prevent/Channel pathways.
- Where there is immediate danger or suspected criminal activity, contact Police.
- Continue to provide proportionate pastoral and educational support and record decisions/actions.

Prevent referral process

- Notice: a Practitioner identifies behaviour, communication, online activity, relationships or changes that may indicate susceptibility to radicalisation.
- Check: discuss promptly with the DSL/Deputy DSL, consider context and other safeguarding explanations, and record the concern.
- Share: where concern remains, follow the current Norfolk/national Prevent referral pathway. Contact CADS as part of the child safeguarding route where appropriate and use the current Prevent referral form/process.
- The DSL checks current Norfolk Police/Prevent referral details at the time of referral so the policy does not become unsafe if a mailbox or form changes.
- Immediate danger or urgent terrorism-related risk: call 999.
- Record the referral, advice, decision and any Channel/other support outcome, and continue appropriate support for the learner.

Appendix 2 – Indicators of Abuse

Indicators are not proof of abuse and must be considered in the context of the individual child. Equally, the absence of visible indicators does not mean abuse has not occurred.

Possible indicators may include

- unexplained injuries, repeated injuries or explanations that do not fit;
- marked changes in mood, behaviour, confidence, sleep, eating, attendance or engagement;
- fearfulness, hypervigilance, withdrawal, aggression, sexualised behaviour or age-inappropriate sexual knowledge;
- poor hygiene, hunger, inappropriate clothing, untreated medical needs or persistent tiredness;
- sudden gifts, money, phones, travel, older associates, unexplained absences or secrecy;
- distress linked to devices, messages, online relationships, image sharing or threats;
- self-harm, suicidal thoughts, substance use or risk-taking;
- a child saying, indicating or communicating that something has happened.

Practitioners must respond to the whole picture, use professional curiosity and report concerns rather than attempting to prove abuse.

Appendix 3 – Additional Safeguarding Issues

Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation

Exploitation involves an imbalance of power in which a child is coerced, manipulated, deceived or controlled for another person's benefit. Apparent consent does not remove safeguarding concern. Exploitation can occur online and offline and may involve exchange, debt, threats, violence, status or belonging.

County Lines

County Lines describes organised criminal networks using dedicated phone lines or other communication methods to facilitate drug supply, often exploiting children or vulnerable adults to move or store drugs, money or weapons. Exploitation can occur locally as well as across geographical areas.

Domestic Abuse

Children can be victims of domestic abuse in their own right when they see, hear or experience its effects. Domestic abuse can include physical or sexual abuse, threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse and psychological or emotional abuse.

FGM, Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Abuse

Any concern about FGM, forced marriage or abuse committed in the name of so-called honour must be reported immediately through safeguarding procedures. Practitioners must be aware of specific statutory duties that may apply to regulated professionals.

Online Abuse

Online abuse can include grooming, sexual exploitation, coercion, cyberbullying, intimate image abuse, radicalisation, hate, scams, harmful content and AI-generated/deepfake abuse. Online and offline risks often overlap.

Child-on-Child Abuse

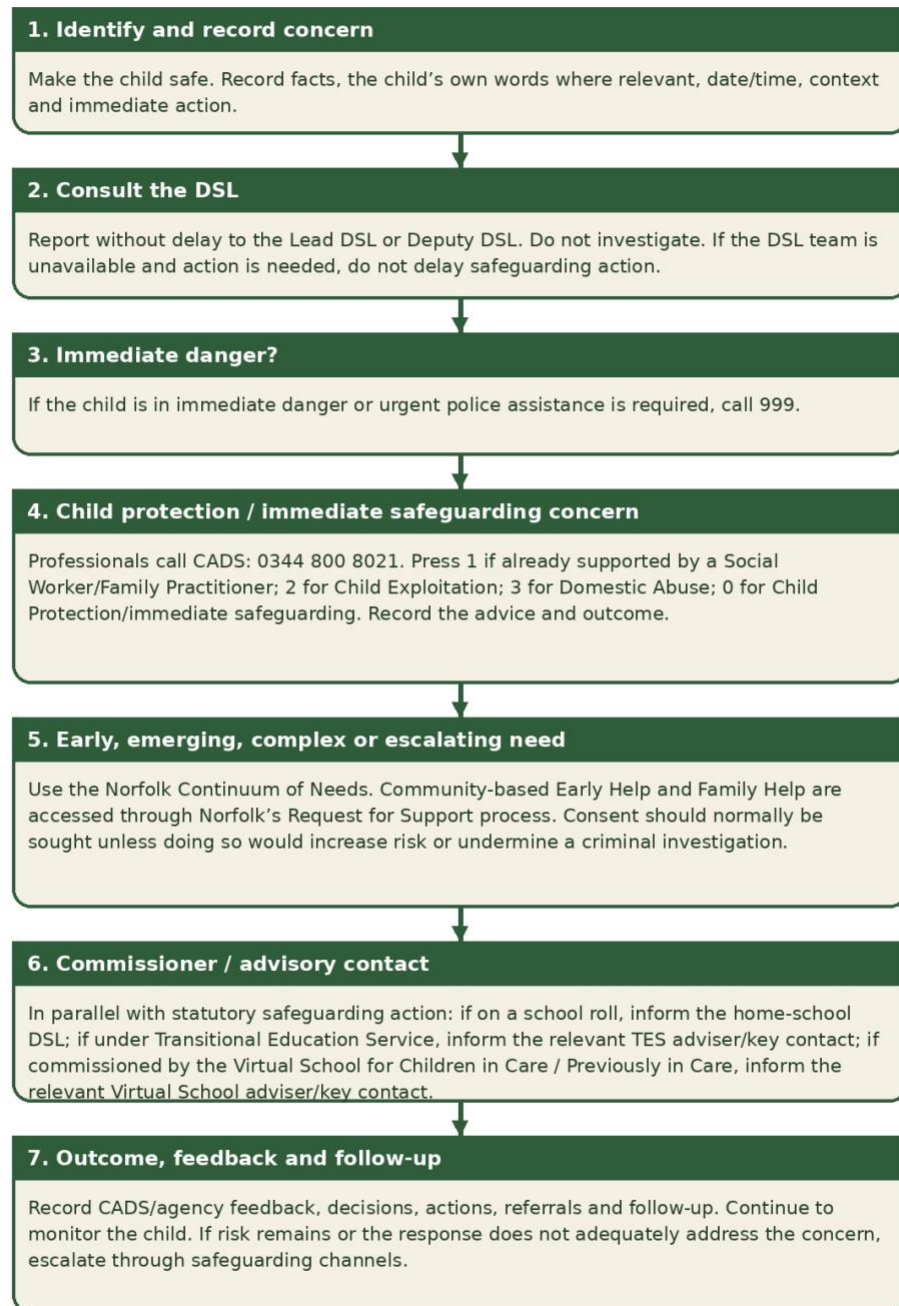
All child-on-child abuse is taken seriously. It is never dismissed as banter, part of growing up or an inevitable feature of relationships. Responses will consider the needs and safety of all children involved, including any wider peer or contextual risk.

Appendix 4 – Norfolk CADS Flowchart Process

The following Woodland Pathways decision pathway is adapted from the current Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership “Safeguarding CADS Flowchart Process” (July 2026 v2). Practitioners should use the current Norfolk source if procedures are updated.

Woodland Pathways - Norfolk CADS Decision Pathway

Adapted from Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership CADS Flowchart Process, July 2026 v2



Emergency: 999 • CADS professionals: 0344 800 8021 • Public / out of hours: 0344 800 8020

This local diagram supports - and does not replace - the current Norfolk CADS flowchart and Continuum of Needs.

Current Norfolk process: child protection/immediate safeguarding concerns → CADS 0344 800 8021; emergency → 999; early/community/Family Help → Request for Support pathway.

Appendix 5 – Online Safety Incident Response

- Make the child/young person safe and address any immediate risk.
- Do not unnecessarily view, copy, download or forward harmful/illegal content.
- Preserve relevant evidence safely where lawful and necessary.
- Report immediately to the DSL/Deputy DSL and complete the Online Safety Incident Reporting Form where appropriate.
- Consider CADS/Police/LADO depending on whether the concern involves a child, criminality or adult conduct.
- Use specialist reporting routes such as CEOP, IWF/Report Remove or terrorism/hate reporting where relevant.
- Inform parents/carers where appropriate and safe.
- Review filtering, supervision, risk assessment, education and policy learning after the incident.

Appendix 6 – Practitioner Safeguarding Acknowledgement

I confirm that I have read and understood the Woodland Pathways Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and know how to report a concern about a child, an adult working with children, or an online safety incident.

I understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that I must act without delay where I believe a child may be at risk.

Name: _____

Role: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____