



ARK Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

September 2026

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy outlines the commitment of ARK Alternative Education Provision (ARK AEP) to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We aim to create a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment where every student feels valued, listened to and protected.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff, volunteers and stakeholders at ARK AEP understand their responsibilities in safeguarding and protecting children and young people from harm, in line with current statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and stakeholders at ARK AEP, including those involved in the delivery of ASDAN qualifications, alternative provision, off-site learning and partnership work with other providers and schools.

Safeguarding Principles

- Ensuring the safety and well-being of all students.
- Promoting a culture of vigilance, professional curiosity and accountability.

- Providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students.
- Ensuring that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Working in partnership with families, schools, providers and external agencies.
- Acting promptly on concerns, disclosures or indicators of harm.

ARK Values

Our safeguarding practice is underpinned by the following ARK values:

- Acceptance: embracing diversity and promoting inclusion.
- Respect: treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- Kindness: fostering a caring and supportive environment.
- Aspirations: encouraging students to achieve their full potential.
- Empathy: understanding and responding to the needs of others.
- Positivity: promoting a positive and optimistic outlook.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at ARK AEP is Kay Walton. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is Allison Middlemas. The DSL is responsible for overseeing safeguarding and child protection matters and is the first point of contact for any safeguarding concerns. The DSL ensures that appropriate action is taken in accordance with this policy, statutory guidance and local procedures. The DSL and DDSL support each other in leading and promoting a positive safeguarding culture across ARK AEP and partner provision.

Types of Abuse

Abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation
- Domestic abuse
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Online abuse and technology-facilitated harm

- Child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment

Reporting Procedures

All staff and volunteers at ARK AEP have a duty to report any safeguarding concern to the DSL immediately. Concerns can be reported verbally or in writing and must be recorded accurately, factually and without delay.

The DSL will assess the situation and take appropriate action, which may include consulting with children's social care, the police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), early help services or other relevant agencies. Staff should refer to ARK reporting safeguarding processes for detailed internal procedures.

Staff Responsibilities

- Be aware of the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Report any concern to the DSL immediately.
- Attend safeguarding training and keep up to date with safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Promote a safe and supportive environment for all students.
- Maintain professional curiosity and act in the best interests of the child at all times.
- Understand that students who are absent from education may be at increased risk of harm.

Training and Support

ARK AEP is committed to providing regular safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers. The DSL will ensure that all staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and have access to appropriate support and resources. All staff are trained to at least Level 1 in safeguarding. Both the DSL and the DDSL hold a Level 6 Safeguarding Qualification. All ARK staff are trained to follow the correct safeguarding processes in line with staff induction and safeguarding checklist guidance.

Safer Recruitment

ARK AEP follows safer recruitment practices to ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children and young people. This includes carrying out background and pre-appointment checks, obtaining references,

considering online searches where appropriate for shortlisted candidates, and conducting interviews in accordance with safeguarding guidance. The DSL and DDSL are responsible for maintaining the Single Central Record, which must be accurate and up to date.

Record Keeping

Accurate and confidential record keeping is essential for effective safeguarding. The DSL is responsible for maintaining detailed records of safeguarding concerns, actions taken, outcomes and any information shared with partner agencies or providers. These records will be stored securely and will only be accessible to authorised personnel.

KCSIE 2025/2026 Updates Reflected in This Policy

- ARK AEP recognises that the September 2025 edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education is now in force and that the changes are mainly technical, but important for policy alignment.
- Online safety now explicitly includes risks linked to misinformation, disinformation, fake news and conspiracy theories.
- Staff and leaders should understand the safeguarding implications of generative AI and ensure filtering, monitoring and cyber resilience arrangements remain effective.
- Attendance remains a safeguarding priority. Children who are absent from education may be at greater risk, and staff must respond promptly to patterns of absence or disengagement.
- Where ARK AEP commissions or uses alternative provision, ARK AEP retains responsibility for the safeguarding of the child and must seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding checks and arrangements are in place.
- The role of Virtual School Heads now includes promoting the educational achievement of children in kinship care, and staff should be mindful of the vulnerabilities and support needs of this group.

Local Safeguarding Contacts

Hull Safeguarding Services

- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 01482 790933
- Early Help and Safeguarding Hub (EHASH): 01482 448879 option 4

- Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): 01482 300304
- Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership: 01482 379090
- The Hub Safeguarding Lead: Lee-Quinn Hill: 01482 304200

East Riding Safeguarding Services

- Children's Safeguarding Hub / Early Help: 01482 395500
- Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): 01482 393939
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 01482 396999
- East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership (ERSCP): see local partnership procedures and reporting guidance

Partner and School Contacts

- Hornsea School contact: Vicky Parnaby - 01964 563770
- Cottingham School contact: Rylee Jones - 01482 847498
- Winifred Holtby: James Krebs - 01482 826207
- ASPIRE: Phil Burns - 01482 318 789
- Withernsea School: John Blades - 01964 613133

The DSL and DDSL are responsible for sharing relevant safeguarding information with providers, partner schools and external agencies on a need-to-know basis in order to protect children and promote their welfare.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL and the senior leadership team to ensure it remains effective, compliant and up to date. Any changes to the policy will be communicated to all staff, volunteers and stakeholders.

Date updated: 21.07.26

Review date: 21.07.27