



Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust

Trust Safeguarding Policy Statement September 2026

- The Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust (ESCAT) instils the ethos that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The ESCAT Board of Directors are ultimately accountable for safeguarding in the Trust's academy schools.
- The ESCAT Board of Directors understands the safeguarding responsibilities placed upon the Trust as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and other relevant statutory guidance.
- The Trust recognises the contribution it can and must make to protecting and supporting children and young people in its schools. Their welfare is of paramount importance.
- ESCAT requires each individual school within the Trust to have safeguarding policies and practice which:
 - meet statutory requirements
 - reflect the requirements of the Local Authorities
 - comply with any additional expectations of good practice, determined at Trust level.

School and Local Authority Policies and Contacts

Please check an individual school's Safeguarding Policy for further details of school and Local Authority contact points, together with other locally determined arrangements. This can be obtained via the school website or the school office, upon request.

Responsibilities of the Trust

The Trust ensures the following:

Recruitment

- Rigorous safer recruitment processes are in place for all staff, volunteers and visitors, in accordance with statutory requirements and each school's Safer Recruitment Policy. All schools meet the statutory requirements relating to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- All employees and volunteers who undertake regulated activity with children are subject to the appropriate DBS and other pre-employment checks. These checks, together with other required information, are recorded on the Single Central Record of each school in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. The Trust recognises the 2026 changes to regulated activity, including the removal of the previous supervision exemption.

Specific Policies and Processes

- Safeguarding policies are up to date, robust and relevant, reflecting the context of each school. Policies are reviewed at least annually, normally in the Autumn term, and updated to reflect current statutory guidance, legislation and local safeguarding arrangements.
- Schools have in place safeguarding arrangements designed to identify and respond to all relevant safeguarding issues, including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, modern slavery, serious violence, radicalisation and other forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- All staff within Trust schools are aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Staff Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct, the identity and role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies, and the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education. These arrangements are explained on induction and reinforced through regular updates and whenever guidance or legislation is updated.
- All staff in Trust schools, including staff who do not work directly with children, are provided with Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 on induction and whenever the document is updated. All staff are expected to read Part One in full.

Designated Safeguarding Leads

Each school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and an appropriate number of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs). DSL and DDSL training is undertaken in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, including the requirement for DSLs to undertake training at least every two years and to keep their safeguarding knowledge and skills up to date, with relevant annual refreshers.

Training and Awareness Raising

- All staff governors, including Directors receive safeguarding and child protection training or updates at least annually. As part of induction, all new starters receive appropriate safeguarding training, including online safety and the expectations, roles and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring. Further training on new guidance and updates is delivered through face-to-face sessions, staff meetings, briefings and other appropriate means.
- All staff are aware of their responsibility to provide a safe environment for children to learn. This includes recognising children who may benefit from universal services and community-based early help or targeted support through Family Help, identifying abuse, neglect and exploitation, and knowing how to follow their school's procedures when concerns arise. Staff are trained in the process to follow when a child makes a disclosure or when they otherwise have a safeguarding concern.
- All staff are aware of the reporting arrangements where a safeguarding concern relates to another member of staff, volunteer, trainee teacher, contractor or other person working in the school. Each school also has an appropriate Whistleblowing Policy and procedures for raising concerns where necessary.

Working with Other Agencies

- There are robust arrangements in place in Trust schools for working with safeguarding partners, local authority children's social care, the police, health services and other relevant agencies, and for sharing information appropriately to safeguard children.
- Schools maintain clear arrangements for recording safeguarding concerns, decisions, actions and outcomes, including the rationale for decisions. Safeguarding information is stored securely, shared only with those who need it, and transferred promptly at transition points in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Schools take account of their Local Authority's safeguarding procedures and the arrangements established by the local safeguarding partnership and comply with relevant statutory requirements and requests. Staff understand that data protection legislation is not a barrier to appropriate information sharing where this is necessary to safeguard a child.

- There are procedures in place in schools to handle allegations of abuse or other safeguarding concerns relating to staff, volunteers, trainee teachers, contractors and other adults. Such allegations are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where the criteria are met, and referrals are made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where the statutory criteria are met. There are also procedures to respond to child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence, recognising that such behaviour is a safeguarding issue for both the child harmed and the child who has caused harm.

Online Safety

- There is a whole-school approach to online safety addressing the risks associated with content, contact and conduct. This includes appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, mobile phone arrangements and online safety training for staff. Filtering and monitoring effectiveness is reviewed at least annually by the member of the senior leadership team responsible for filtering and monitoring, with support from the DSL and IT support, including checks across relevant internet-connected devices and locations. Schools also promote the safe and effective use of technology and generative artificial intelligence.
- Within the curriculum, students are taught about safeguarding, including mental health and wellbeing, healthy online and offline relationships, child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (including images or videos generated or altered using artificial intelligence), misogyny and other forms of prejudice-based harm, radicalisation and online safety.
- There are systems in place for children and young people to report concerns, express their views and provide feedback. Staff will not promise confidentiality where safeguarding concerns arise and will always act in the best interests of the child, taking account of their wishes and feelings.

Monitoring

How does the Trust monitor this?

- Safeguarding audits are completed regularly in each school and a summary of the audit findings and actions is reported to the Local Governing Body and to the Trust. Audits consider compliance with statutory safeguarding requirements, including KCSIE 2026, and the effectiveness of safeguarding practice.
- The Trust will consider the quality of safeguarding challenge, oversight and support provided by Local Governing Bodies and will ensure that safeguarding receives appropriate strategic oversight at Trust level.
- Each Academy has a named link Governor for Safeguarding. The link Governor reviews the safeguarding arrangements for the school on a regular basis, normally termly, and reports significant issues or concerns to the Trust Board.
- Where a school in the Trust believes there has been a significant safeguarding or Child Protection issue, this is reported to the Trust, this may lead to an internal scrutiny to identify any failings and lessons learned.
- Where necessary, the Trust will commission additional external challenge and support to ensure schools meet their statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Failure to implement appropriate safeguarding arrangements in academies carries significant reputational and regulatory risk for the Trust.

ESCAT Safeguarding Key Personnel

The Trust takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously and has formed a safeguarding working group at Trust level.

Key Personnel are:

Safeguarding Director
Safer Recruitment Lead
CEO