FSN Statement for Safeguarding 2026-2027

AIMS of SAFEGUARDING

- to ensure that safeguarding is paramount and children and their families and staff feel safe and supported, physically, mentally and emotionally
- to protect children and young people who are educated at the Free School Norwich from harm.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection
- to ensure that parents understand the important placed on safeguarding and their role in it
- to ensure that governors are effective in their monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding policy, systems and practice

THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of The Free School Norwich, including senior managers and the Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers, agency staff and students.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation is available from nspcc.org.uk/learning.

Supporting documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents.

- Role description for the designated safeguarding officer
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Recording concerns and information sharing
- Child protection records retention and storage
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Behaviour policy
- Mobile phone and Camera policy
- Safer recruitment and Selection Policy
- Online safety
- Anti-bullying
- Managing complaints
- Whistleblowing
- Health and safety
- Induction, training, supervision and support
- Adult to child supervision ratios

We believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

. We recognise that:

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare. We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:
- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance in accordance with our GDPR privacy notice
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Contact details

Designated lead for safeguarding and child protection:

Darren Webster dwebster@freeschoolnorwich.org.uk

Board lead for safeguarding and child protection:

Julia Virgoe: chair@freeschoolnorwich.org.uk

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

A safeguarding leaflet for visitors is to be found at the desk on arrival with clear guidance on visitor procedures, keeping yourself and others safe and evacuation procedures.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. It was last reviewed in December 2024.

THRIVE

We are a THRIVE school.

For us, this means that we have THRIVE embedded within our ethos and THRIVE approaches are followed across our whole school setting. Our Behaviour Policy reflects this.

The THRIVE approach supports and encourages the development of confident, curious, creative and capable children and young people, who are open to learning and better equipped to deal with life's ups and downs.

We have a commitment to continually deepen our understanding of how social and emotional learning develops and how this can be supported in school.

We recognise that behaviours can be learnt and be held within our cognitive awareness, but also that they can be unconscious, patterned, non-problem-solving defence or discharge responses. Attentive, observant adults working with children are required to recognise behaviours, identify underlying needs and respond in appropriate ways.

Our staff regularly have training in order to deepen knowledge and our school ethos, environment, resources, learning approaches, timetable and planning are all informed by our understanding of how importantly each impacts on social, emotional and academic development and learning.

At The Free School Norwich, we want all our children to develop and learn to the best of their ability.

We believe, as in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, that children learn best when their basic (physiological requirements and feeling safe) and their psychological needs(their sense of belonging and accomplishment) are met before we address their cognitive needs.

This includes learning about their behaviour and emotions. We need to ensure that we have an effective approach to securing high quality personal development and well-being through:

- being taught to understand, regulate and manage emotions;
- to apply thinking between feeling (sensation and emotion) and action;
- to increasingly show empathy and understanding to others;
- being taught the skills to develop resilience and responsibility in readiness for them taking their place in society.
- being encouraged to take a sense of pride in themselves and to build self-awareness Just as in other curriculum areas, these skills need to be directly taught in a 'right time' age appropriate way. For some children, this may not be their chronological age. We are very clear that everyone has the right to feel safe, special and to have their needs met.

Our Behaviour Policy reflects the important social and emotional learning that each child needs to develop in order to feel 'safe enough' to learn in lessons. We need to ensure that we have an effective approach to securing high quality personal development and well-being through the learning values contained within our C U THRIVE programme (See below)

Learning characteristics
The CU THRIVE Learning Characteristics set out below encourage growth mindset. They celebrate making the best choices, responsibility, curiosity, skills and knowledge, making connections, learning, concentration, creativity, innovation, communication and resilience. Building learning characteristics is now considered to be an important aspect of children's education as part of their preparation for the 21st Century. It teaches them about their own resourcefulness and supports their mental and emotional health. It is also designed to cater for a changing economy where the next generation is likely to have to be more self-reliant.

CU THRIVE - A programme to ensure that the voice of the community is heard and responded to

COMMUNICATION
Children have opportunities to speak up and be heard and develop caring relationships with those around them through communication. Through the many curriculum opportunities, including through PSHE which challenges children to look at their own behaviour towards others and themed units, they learn to express themselves, and listen to and understand the thoughts and ideas of others. Through discussion, appropriate challenge and support in their learning, and the growing capacity to think critically, they can lead change for themselves, others and the wider world.

Children are safe and feel safe and this is evidenced in:

- Individual reading, writing and spelling data
- Informal and formal staff reports on individual children
- The progress they make with their learning
- The impact of KS1 Learning heroes (Miss Super Chooser, Super Explorer Man, I know Agent, Link and Learn Hero, Achieving Iron Man, Miss Fantastic Focus, Mr Agent Ideas and Have a Go Hero) and the CU THRIVE values
- Snack and chat and circle times
- Hear me diaries (2 stars and a wish KS1) (2 things going well, one you would like to improve- can be academic or pastoral (pupil choice)
- Student Council - programme of dates, agenda, outcomes, minutes of meetings
- Eco Council, programme of dates, agenda, outcomes, minutes)
- The use of rewards for good citizenship, behaviour and learning- see fortnightly newsletter
- The Green Flag work

UNDERSTANDING AND VALUING DIFFERENCE
Children learn that we are all different and to respect that difference. They also learn to promote respect amongst each other by recognising the need to learn from mistakes. Children understand that they cannot learn unless their environment is safe and supportive. They are taught the value of kindness.

The school understands and promotes the importance of British Values to help us learn. These are demonstrated through:

- Displays

- Teaching children to speak up, be heard and listen
- Encouraging children to understand the choices we make and why we make them
- Teaching children about their rights and duties
- A cycle of assemblies promoting anti- bullying and good citizenship
- our Behaviour Management approaches and dynamic, 'in the moment' learning all promote respect
- Active listening and respecting other voices

We measure how well we are succeeding by tracking the number of issues relating to respect and behaviour that arise.

TRUST

- Children know which adult or adults they can turn to for help and we check they know.
- Children know that it is their responsibility to ask and watch out for each other so that we can nip concerns in the bud as much as possible.
- They trust staff to take appropriate action and feedback.
- They come to learn that they cannot be promised confidentiality and why
- Staff keep records of which pupils ask for their help and why

HARD WORK

- Children are encouraged and taught to work hard to achieve their best. This is modelled to them
- Children come to know what their best looks like through evaluation and improvement
- Children have plenty of opportunity to learn through feedback
- There is good evidence of motivation, appropriate support and challenge and progress as well as at least good learning and teaching. It is regularly seen through lesson observation and work scrutiny

RESPECT

- Children learn that respect is at the heart of everything we do and treat each other with kindness

INDEPENDENCE

- Children learn to build responsibility and independence as they grow and learn.
- Children are taught to tell the truth, learn from their mistakes and have another go. In KS1, Have a Go Hero helps them. In KS2 pupils can talk about truth and honesty and what these words mean to them.
- Children's individual stories show this. Storytelling and rewards show a culture of growing independence and responsibility

VITALITY

- Children learn to make the most of opportunities and aim to achieve in accordance with the ethos of the school. Their individual story confirms this.

EXPECTATIONS

- Children know that expectations are constantly under review.
- Setting high standards, working towards them, reviewing and reflecting and learning from mistakes made is the key cycle of learning.

The following expectations are regularly reviewed:

- Pupil safeguarding in line with Safeguarding plan aims and success criteria
- Pupil learning
- Staff Coaching and Mentoring Programme
- SLT Coaching and Mentoring Programme
- Staff and leadership development
- Governance

CU THRIVE for parents

COMMUNICATIONS

- See Communications Strategy (Separate Document)
- Policies up to date
- Policies explained
- Ambassadors plan to replace Friends of FSN

UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENCE

- Open door policy.
- Understanding of Complaints and Concerns policy
- British Values
- Ambassadors plan to replace Friends of FSN

TRUST

- All communications acted upon in accordance with the Complaints and Concerns policy and the Communications Strategy

RESPECT

- All parents to be asked to revisit the home-school agreement and re read the safeguarding suite of policies and take ownership
- Parents ask for advice and share when there are issues of concern which require a shared approach such as online activity

RESPECT for the importance of SAFEGUARDING is vital and parents are asked to show this respect by:

- Letting the class teacher know of any concerns at an early stage, so that early action to prevent a problem escalating can be decided
- Working with the School to solve problems
- Encouraging your child to make the best and safe choices for themselves and others
- Making sure you all know how to get support when you need it

INDEPENDENCE

- Parents understand that everyone is working towards a child's growing independence.
- Encouraging a child to take growing responsibility for their learning through asking questions, research, commitment to a task, practice, enthusiasm and curiosity or just whatever it takes to make progress must be fostered.

VITALITY

- Parents understand that motivation and commitment are everything. Their interest and encouragement are vital.

EXPECTATIONS

- Parents know that expectations of pastoral and academic development are discussed with their child frequently and communicated to them.
- Parents know that learners aim to have high standards, work towards them, review, reflect and learn from mistakes and come to understand this as the key cycle of learning.
- Parents are kept informed of this through the cycle of Parents' Evenings and reports. They are always welcome to make an appointment to talk to the class teacher.

Suite of Safeguarding Policies (* on website. Otherwise available through the School Office)

- Review anti- bullying policy with community in anti-bullying week (third week of January) .
- *Behaviour
- Missing Child
- *Health and Safety
- Fire Policy
- Risk assessment
- Whistleblowing
- *First Aid
- *Complaints
- *Teaching and Learning
- *EYFS
- *SEND and EAL
- PSHE
- Relationships and Sex Education
- *E Safety
- *Disability, equality and accessibility
- *Equal opportunities
- *GDPR
- *The Attendance Policy

Staff Policies

- Acceptable Use of IT for Staff
- Code of Conduct
- Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy

EXTERNAL SCRUTINY

In May 2025, the school received an inspection by OFSTED. Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. They met with the Principal, senior leaders and trustees, including the chair of the trust. Inspectors held meetings with a range of staff and pupils. They spoke to parents at the school gate. Inspectors looked at external safeguarding audits, trustee board minutes and other documentation relating to safeguarding practices in the school. Having considered all the evidence, they were of the opinion that safeguarding was effective in school.

Principal: Darren Webster on behalf of the staff at the Free School Norwich

Chair of Trustees: Julia Virgoe

Approved: July 2026

Policy Review date: July 2027