

Karate & Dance Fed Ltd - 17150545

Chief Executive Officer: Mr. J Byrne



Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Document Reference Number	SCL01
Title	Safeguarding & Child Protection
Policy Owner	Mr. Jake Byrne
Version	1.0
Date Written	14.09.2026
Date Ratified	September 2026
Next Review Date	September 2027

Version Control

Version	Last Modified	Modified By	Document Changes

1. Policy Statement

Karate & Dance Federation Ltd (KDF) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person who participates in KDF Karate, KDF Dance or any activity organised, delivered or supervised by KDF. The safety, welfare, dignity and rights of children take priority over organisational reputation, commercial considerations, relationships with families or staff, competition results, performance outcomes and any other operational concern.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is any person who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. A young person does not cease to be a child for safeguarding purposes because they are aged sixteen or seventeen, behave independently, coach younger students, hold a volunteer role or undertake leadership responsibilities within KDF.

Safeguarding is wider than responding to allegations of abuse. KDF understands safeguarding to include protecting children from maltreatment within and outside the home and online, preventing impairment of health or development, providing safe and effective environments, identifying children who may need help or protection and taking timely action when concerns arise.

KDF's safeguarding culture reflects its values of Kindness, Diversity, Friendship and supports the KDF Promise: Every Student, Every Session, Every Time. Every child has the right to participate in an environment in which they are heard, respected, protected and taken seriously.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear safeguarding framework across the whole organisation. It explains how KDF prevents harm, recognises concerns, responds to disclosures, records safeguarding information, shares concerns appropriately, makes referrals and manages allegations or concerns relating to staff, volunteers, students, families, visitors and external organisations.

The policy also establishes expectations concerning professional boundaries, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, online safety, physical contact, missing children, collection arrangements, SEND, Early Years provision, photography, external hirers, allegations against adults, low-level concerns and multi-agency safeguarding.

3. Scope

This policy applies to directors, employees, coaches, assistant coaches, administrators, volunteers, junior coaches, young leaders, work-experience students, contractors acting in relevant roles and any other person carrying out work on behalf of KDF.

Relevant expectations also apply to parents, carers, spectators, visitors and hirers while they are using KDF premises or participating in KDF activities. External organisations remain responsible for their own safeguarding systems but must not operate on KDF premises in a manner that exposes KDF students or other children to foreseeable harm.

The policy applies to activity at KDF premises, external venues, performances, gradings, competitions, demonstrations, trips, online communication and any other situation in which a person is acting in a KDF role.

4. Safeguarding Framework

KDF will have regard to the principles contained within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, relevant Children Acts, the Department for Education's safeguarding guidance for out-of-school settings, the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, relevant provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, data-protection law and other legislation and statutory guidance applicable to the circumstances.

KDF is an out-of-school sports and performing-arts provider rather than a maintained school and will not inaccurately present school-specific duties as automatically applying to KDF. Nevertheless, where guidance such as Keeping Children Safe in Education contains established good safeguarding practice that is relevant to KDF, the organisation may use those principles as an additional benchmark.

KDF will also cooperate with Warwickshire safeguarding arrangements, children's social care, the Local Authority Designated Officer, police, healthcare services and other agencies where necessary to protect a child.

5. Safeguarding Is Everyone's Responsibility

Every adult working within KDF has a responsibility to safeguard children. Safeguarding must never be regarded solely as the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead, Chief Executive Officer or senior coaches.

Staff and volunteers are expected to remain alert to changes in behaviour, unexplained injuries, concerning comments, inappropriate relationships, unsafe adult behaviour, concerning online activity and any other indication that a child may need help or protection.

A person does not need proof before reporting a safeguarding concern. The role of staff is to recognise, respond, record and report; investigation and determination of whether abuse has occurred belong to the appropriate safeguarding professionals.

6. Leadership and Safeguarding Culture

KDF Senior Leadership is responsible for maintaining a culture in which safeguarding is visible, embedded and routinely discussed. Leaders must ensure that commercial relationships, friendships, staff status or organisational reputation never discourage appropriate safeguarding action.

Leaders should promote an environment in which children can speak openly, adults can raise concerns about colleagues and mistakes or uncertainty can be escalated without fear of unreasonable criticism.

Safeguarding arrangements should actively promote inclusion and challenge discriminatory, degrading or prejudicial behaviour. Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism and other discriminatory behaviour may themselves create safeguarding concerns and may also make children less likely to seek help.

7. Designated Safeguarding Lead

KDF will appoint an appropriately trained Designated Safeguarding Lead or organisational Safeguarding Lead with sufficient seniority and authority to coordinate safeguarding arrangements. Appropriate deputy or alternative safeguarding arrangements should also exist so that concerns can be acted upon when the principal safeguarding lead is unavailable.

The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for advising staff, receiving and reviewing concerns, maintaining safeguarding records, making or coordinating referrals, liaising with safeguarding agencies and supporting organisational learning following incidents.

The existence of a Safeguarding Lead does not prevent any person from contacting children's social care or police directly where a child may be at immediate risk or where they believe appropriate safeguarding action is not being taken.

8. Chief Executive Officer Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer retains overall organisational responsibility for ensuring effective safeguarding governance, suitable policies, safer recruitment, appropriate training and clear reporting arrangements.

Where an allegation concerns the Safeguarding Lead, the CEO must ensure that the concern is referred to the appropriate external authority without allowing conflicts of interest to affect the response. Where the allegation concerns the CEO, the concern must be escalated through another appropriate senior person and directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer, children's social care or police as appropriate.

No senior role within KDF places a person above safeguarding scrutiny.

9. Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

Staff and volunteers must know how to report a safeguarding concern, how to respond to a disclosure and who holds safeguarding responsibility within the organisation.

They must maintain professional boundaries, avoid placing themselves or children in unnecessarily vulnerable situations and report behaviour by another adult that appears unsafe, inappropriate or inconsistent with KDF standards.

A concern must not be withheld because the individual is uncertain whether it is “serious enough”. Safeguarding leads and external professionals can determine the appropriate threshold.

10. Junior Coaches and Young Leaders

Junior coaches and young leaders who are themselves under eighteen remain children for safeguarding purposes. Their coaching or leadership role does not transfer adult safeguarding responsibility onto them.

They must not be expected to manage safeguarding disclosures independently, conduct intimate or personal care, manage aggressive adults, supervise isolated one-to-one situations without appropriate arrangements or investigate concerns involving other children.

Any concern disclosed to a junior coach or young leader should be passed immediately to an appropriate adult safeguarding lead.

11. Safer Recruitment

KDF will use safer recruitment procedures appropriate to roles involving children. Recruitment should consider identity, employment or volunteering history, suitability, references, qualifications where relevant and criminal-record checks where the role is eligible.

The fact that an individual is known personally to senior staff does not remove the need for appropriate recruitment controls.

Recruitment decisions should consider both formal information and any conduct or safeguarding concern that reasonably calls the person’s suitability for child-facing work into question.

12. DBS and Suitability Checks

DBS checks will be undertaken where roles are legally eligible for them and at the appropriate level. KDF will not describe a DBS certificate as proof that a person is permanently safe to work with children.

Safeguarding suitability is an ongoing responsibility. Concerns that arise after recruitment must be acted upon regardless of whether an individual previously received a clear DBS certificate.

Where KDF removes a person from regulated activity because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to children, or would have removed them had they not resigned or otherwise left, KDF will consider any statutory duty to refer the individual to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

13. Safeguarding Training

All relevant staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding information and training proportionate to their role. Training should cover recognising harm, responding to disclosures, reporting concerns, professional boundaries, child-on-child abuse, online safety and allegations concerning adults.

Safeguarding training should be refreshed periodically and supplemented by briefings where legislation, local procedures or emerging risks change.

Staff should not be expected to rely indefinitely on training completed for a previous organisation or many years earlier.

14. Recognising Abuse and Neglect

Safeguarding concerns may arise through physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation or combinations of these forms of harm. Abuse may occur within a family, institution, community, peer group, intimate relationship or online environment.

Children may communicate harm directly, indirectly or through changes in behaviour. A child may withdraw, become unusually aggressive, become fearful of particular people, show developmentally unusual sexualised behaviour, display unexplained injuries or show significant changes in attendance, mood, self-care or performance.

Staff must avoid assuming that children experiencing harm will present in one predictable way.

15. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also occur where an adult fabricates or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Any injury or explanation that causes safeguarding concern should be recorded factually and escalated rather than investigated informally by coaching staff.

16. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can include persistent humiliation, rejection, intimidation, threats, controlling behaviour, inappropriate expectations, isolation or making a child feel worthless or unloved.

In sport and performing arts settings, emotionally harmful behaviour may be disguised as discipline, motivation, “tough coaching” or performance expectations. KDF does not accept degrading or humiliating treatment as legitimate coaching practice.

Repeated criticism of a child’s body, ability, disability, appearance or worth may constitute serious professional and safeguarding concern.

17. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, enticing or manipulating a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening. It can involve physical

contact or non-contact activity, including sexual imagery, sexual communication and online abuse.

Children may be sexually abused by adults or other children.

Any sexualised behaviour by an adult toward a child, grooming behaviour, sexual communication, inappropriate image sharing or attempt to establish a secretive relationship must be treated as a serious safeguarding concern.

18. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs where this is likely to result in serious impairment of their health or development.

Indicators may include persistent hunger, unsuitable clothing, untreated health needs, inadequate supervision, repeated unexplained non-attendance or a caregiver repeatedly failing to provide essential medication or safety arrangements.

Individual circumstances must be considered sensitively. Poverty, disability or need for support should not automatically be interpreted as neglect.

19. Exploitation and Extra-Familial Harm

Children may experience harm beyond their family environment, including criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, serious youth violence, gang-related harm, trafficking and coercion.

KDF staff should remain alert where a child has unexplained money or possessions, unexplained absences, association with concerning adults or older peers, changes in behaviour or evidence of pressure, threats or exploitation.

Safeguarding assessments should consider both what is happening within a child's family and what may be happening within their wider peer, community or online environment.

20. Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control

Children may be harmed through experiencing domestic abuse directly or through its impact within their household. Domestic abuse can include physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, threatening behaviour, coercive control and economic abuse.

A child does not need to be physically assaulted themselves in order to be affected significantly by domestic abuse.

Information suggesting that a child or parent may be experiencing domestic abuse should be handled sensitively and referred where necessary without actions that could inadvertently increase risk.

21. Child-on-Child Abuse

Children can abuse other children. KDF will never dismiss harmful behaviour as ordinary banter, horseplay, flirting or “children being children” simply because the person causing harm is also under eighteen.

Child-on-child abuse may include physical assault, bullying, sexual harassment, sexual violence, coercion, image-based abuse, initiation or hazing, prejudice-based abuse, controlling behaviour and online abuse.

Both the child harmed and the child displaying harmful behaviour may require safeguarding support. Responses should protect victims while recognising that children who cause harm may themselves have experienced trauma, exploitation or abuse.

22. Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Between Children

Sexual comments, sexualised name-calling, unwanted touching, sexual jokes, pressure for images, unwanted sexual messages or other sexually harmful behaviour must not be normalised.

Staff should intervene appropriately and report concerns. A victim should never be blamed for clothing, behaviour, previous relationships or participation in online communication.

Where behaviour indicates possible criminal offending or significant risk, police and children's social care should be involved as appropriate.

23. Bullying and Prejudice-Based Harm

Bullying may become a safeguarding concern where it is severe, persistent or causes significant physical or emotional harm. Bullying may take place face to face or through online platforms.

KDF will take particular care with bullying linked to disability, SEND, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or another characteristic because discriminatory abuse may significantly affect a child's sense of safety and belonging.

Bullying concerns should be managed under behavioural procedures while safeguarding processes are used where the level of harm warrants them.

24. Online Safety and Technology-Facilitated Harm

Safeguarding applies to online environments as well as physical spaces. Children may experience grooming, harassment, coercion, sexual exploitation, cyberbullying, sextortion, inappropriate content or pressure to produce or share sexual images.

Staff should not use personal online relationships with students in ways that blur professional boundaries. Communication with students should use approved organisational arrangements wherever reasonably practicable.

Any concern involving sexual images of children must be escalated immediately. Staff must not forward, save unnecessarily, copy or distribute such material as part of an informal investigation.

25. Photography, Video and Recording

Photography or video involving children must be undertaken in accordance with KDF's safeguarding, consent and data-protection arrangements.

Images must never be taken in toilets, changing environments, intimate-care situations or another setting where a child has a reasonable expectation of additional privacy.

A parent's general wish to photograph their own child does not create an unrestricted right to record other children or interfere with KDF's safeguarding arrangements.

26. Grooming and Professional Boundaries

Grooming may involve gradually building trust with a child, family or colleagues in order to obtain inappropriate access to a child or reduce the likelihood that concerning behaviour will be challenged.

Staff must maintain clear professional boundaries and avoid secret communication, favouritism, inappropriate gifts, sexualised discussion, unnecessary private meetings or relationships that move beyond the legitimate adult-child role.

A pattern of individually minor boundary concerns may become significant when considered collectively and should therefore be reported.

27. Positions of Trust

Adults working as coaches, instructors and others in recognised positions of trust must understand that the apparent agreement of a child does not make an inappropriate sexual relationship acceptable.

Relevant criminal law protects sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds in specified positions-of-trust relationships, including circumstances relating to sport and coaching. KDF prohibits sexual or romantic relationships between adult staff and children participating in KDF regardless of arguments concerning consent.

Professional boundaries continue to apply to communication outside ordinary session times and through social media.

28. Physical Contact and Safe Coaching

Physical contact may be legitimate within karate and dance for instruction, correction, first aid, safety and other appropriate purposes. Contact must be necessary, proportionate, professionally appropriate and capable of being explained openly.

Staff should use verbal instruction and demonstration where these provide an effective alternative. Where physical guidance is appropriate, the student should be informed where practicable and their response respected.

Physical contact must never be sexual, punitive, humiliating or used to assert personal dominance.

29. Physical Intervention and Immediate Safety

There may be rare situations where reasonable physical intervention is necessary to prevent a child causing immediate harm to themselves or another person. Any intervention must use the minimum force reasonably necessary for the shortest appropriate period.

Physical intervention must never be used as punishment, retaliation or a substitute for effective behaviour support.

Significant physical interventions should be recorded, communicated to appropriate safeguarding personnel and reviewed.

30. One-to-One Situations

One-to-one coaching or support should be arranged transparently and in a manner that protects both the child and the adult. Wherever practicable, activity should remain observable or accessible to others rather than taking place in isolated or locked environments.

The existence of CCTV does not by itself justify otherwise inappropriate isolation.

Where a student requires individual emotional, SEND or medical support, privacy should be balanced with safeguarding visibility and professional boundaries.

31. Toilets, Changing and Personal Privacy

Children must be afforded appropriate dignity when using toilets or changing clothing. Adults should not enter private changing or toilet environments unnecessarily.

Where a child requires assistance because of age, disability or medical need, support should follow an agreed arrangement and should be no more intrusive than necessary.

Mobile phones and image-recording devices must never be used to record children in toilets, changing environments or personal-care situations.

32. SEND and Safeguarding

Children with SEND may experience increased vulnerability to abuse because of communication barriers, dependency on adults, difficulties recognising unsafe behaviour or assumptions that behavioural changes arise solely from disability.

Staff must remain alert to the possibility that distress, dysregulation, withdrawal, aggression or changes in behaviour may communicate harm.

KDF will use appropriate communication methods, visual support, simplified language or trusted adults where needed to enable SEND students to express concerns and participate in safeguarding processes.

33. Early Years Safeguarding

Younger children may lack the vocabulary, understanding or confidence to explain harm directly. Staff working with Early Years students should remain particularly attentive to unexplained fear, injuries, developmental changes, unusual sexualised behaviour and significant changes in attachment or emotional presentation.

Young children should be taught simple age-appropriate messages concerning bodily autonomy, safe adults, asking for help and the right to say when something makes them uncomfortable.

Safeguarding teaching must remain developmentally appropriate and should not frighten children unnecessarily.

34. Responding to a Disclosure

Where a child discloses harm, the adult should remain calm, listen carefully and allow the child to speak in their own words. The child should be taken seriously and reassured that telling someone was the right thing to do.

Staff should not interrogate the child, repeatedly ask them to recount events or ask leading questions. Only sufficient clarification should be sought to understand what the child is communicating and whether immediate action is required.

The adult must never promise complete confidentiality. The child should be told, in an age-appropriate way, that information may need to be shared with people whose job is to help keep them safe.

35. Immediate Danger and Emergency Action

Where a child appears to be in immediate danger or requires urgent medical assistance, staff should contact police or ambulance services without waiting for permission from senior management.

The child should be kept as safe as reasonably possible while emergency support is obtained.

Where contacting a parent could increase the child's risk, prejudice a police or social-care investigation or alert an alleged perpetrator prematurely, staff should seek safeguarding advice before making that contact.

36. Recording Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding records must be factual, timely and sufficiently detailed to explain what was observed, heard or disclosed and what action followed.

Where recording a disclosure, staff should use the child's own words wherever reasonably possible and distinguish clearly between fact, direct quotation, professional observation and interpretation.

Records should include dates, times, persons involved and decisions made. Staff should not alter original records to make them appear more polished after the event.

37. Safeguarding Information Sharing

Information should be shared when necessary and proportionate to protect children. Data protection must never be used as a blanket reason to withhold information where safeguarding requires appropriate sharing.

KDF will follow current national information-sharing guidance and will share information with children's social care, police, healthcare providers, the Local Authority Designated Officer and other appropriate agencies where necessary.

Information sharing should be purposeful and limited to what is reasonably required, while recognising that an incomplete picture can itself undermine effective safeguarding. Current national information-sharing guidance was updated in September 2026 alongside the wider safeguarding framework.

38. Referrals to Children's Social Care

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, or where a child requires safeguarding support beyond KDF's own competence, a referral should be made to the appropriate local children's social care service.

For children living within Warwickshire, this will normally involve the relevant Warwickshire children and families safeguarding route. Where a child lives elsewhere, the appropriate local authority should be contacted.

A referral must not be delayed solely because every detail is not yet known.

39. Police Referrals

Police should be contacted where a child is in immediate danger, a serious criminal offence may have been committed, urgent protective action is required or advice from safeguarding partners indicates police involvement is appropriate.

KDF staff should preserve relevant evidence and avoid conducting their own criminal investigation.

40. Early Help and Emerging Concerns

Not every safeguarding concern reaches the threshold for statutory child-protection intervention. Some children and families may benefit from earlier support before circumstances escalate.

Where appropriate, KDF may encourage engagement with early-help, family-support, health, education or other community services. Safeguarding concerns should nevertheless continue to be monitored rather than closed simply because an early-help service has become involved.

Repeated lower-level concerns may collectively indicate a more serious pattern and should be reviewed together.

41. Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers or Other Adults

Any allegation that an adult working with children has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, committed an offence against a child, behaved in a way indicating that they may pose a risk to children or behaved in a manner raising concern about their suitability to work with children must be escalated immediately.

The concern should be referred to the appropriate senior person and, where the relevant threshold may be met, discussed promptly with the Local Authority Designated Officer.

KDF must not undertake an internal investigation that compromises an external safeguarding or criminal process.

42. Suspension and Protective Measures

Suspension following an allegation is not automatic and must not be treated as evidence of guilt. KDF will consider whether temporary removal, alternative duties, increased supervision or another protective arrangement is necessary while enquiries take place.

The overriding consideration is the safety of children and integrity of any investigation.

The individual who is the subject of an allegation should be treated fairly and given appropriate information and support, subject to restrictions necessary to protect children or investigations.

43. Low-Level Concerns

Behaviour that does not appear to meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer may still be inconsistent with KDF's professional standards. Examples may include over-familiarity, inappropriate private communication, favouritism, unnecessary one-to-one isolation or boundary behaviour that causes discomfort.

Low-level concerns should be recorded and reviewed so that patterns involving the same individual can be identified.

The term "low-level" describes the apparent threshold of the individual concern and does not mean the behaviour is unimportant.

44. Concerns About the CEO or Safeguarding Leadership

A safeguarding concern involving the CEO, Safeguarding Lead or another senior leader must not be referred solely back to that individual for decision.

The person receiving the concern should contact another authorised senior person and seek advice directly from the Local Authority Designated Officer, children's social care or police as appropriate.

KDF's management hierarchy must never prevent independent safeguarding referral.

45. Whistleblowing

Staff and volunteers must be able to raise safeguarding concerns about colleagues or organisational practice without fear of retaliation.

Where a person believes that KDF is failing to act appropriately, they may use KDF's Whistleblowing & Protected Disclosures Policy and may contact external safeguarding agencies directly.

No person will be disciplined merely for making a genuine safeguarding disclosure in good faith, even where the concern is subsequently not substantiated.

46. Missing Children

A child who cannot be located when expected must be treated as a safeguarding concern. Staff should establish when and where the child was last seen, check appropriate areas without leaving other children inadequately supervised and escalate quickly.

Where the child cannot be located promptly or there is reason to believe they are at risk, police and parents or carers should be contacted as appropriate.

Staff should not delay police involvement merely because they fear the situation may appear embarrassing or reflect poorly on the organisation.

47. Children Leaving Without Permission

Where a child attempts to leave or leaves the premises unexpectedly, staff should assess age, vulnerability, circumstances and immediate danger. Staff should maintain observation where safely possible but must not create greater risk through unsafe pursuit.

Parents or carers and police should be contacted where the circumstances require this.

Students with known risks relating to running, absconding or limited danger awareness may require individual controls within their support arrangements.

48. Arrival, Collection and Late Collection

KDF will maintain clear arrangements for student arrival and collection. Younger or otherwise vulnerable children should only be released in accordance with agreed collection arrangements.

Where an unfamiliar person attempts to collect a child, staff may seek confirmation before release.

A child remaining after collection time must continue to be supervised safely. Persistent late collection may require discussion with the family and may become a safeguarding concern where it exposes the child to repeated neglect or risk.

49. Unauthorised Removal and Family Disputes

Where KDF is informed of a relevant court order, safeguarding restriction or agreed collection limitation, this information should be recorded securely and communicated to staff who need it.

Staff should avoid becoming involved in parental disputes beyond what is necessary to safeguard the child.

Where an adult attempts to remove a child contrary to a known restriction or creates an immediate safety concern, police assistance should be sought.

50. Domestic Abuse and Collection Risk

Where KDF becomes aware of domestic abuse, stalking, harassment or another risk involving collection from the premises, access and release arrangements should be reviewed sensitively.

Information should only be shared with staff who need to implement the safety arrangements.

KDF should not disclose a protected person's attendance, location or timetable to an individual who may pose a risk.

51. Radicalisation and Extremism

KDF recognises that children may be vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist influence online or within the community. Staff should report concerning changes, expressions, relationships or material where these suggest that a child may be at risk of exploitation or radicalisation.

KDF will seek appropriate safeguarding advice and may make referrals through local safeguarding or Channel-related arrangements where relevant.

KDF will not treat ordinary political, religious or cultural discussion as evidence of extremism. Concerns must be assessed objectively and without discriminatory assumptions.

52. Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Abuse

Staff should recognise that some children may face specific forms of abuse including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and so-called honour-based abuse.

Concerns should be referred promptly to the Safeguarding Lead and appropriate statutory agencies. Staff should not attempt mediation with family members where doing so could increase risk.

Where a specific statutory reporting duty applies to a particular professional, that professional remains responsible for complying with it.

53. Child Sexual Exploitation and Criminal Exploitation

Children experiencing exploitation may not recognise themselves as victims and may appear to cooperate with those harming them. Gifts, money, affection, status, threats, debt, violence or coercion may all form part of exploitative relationships.

KDF staff must not dismiss exploitation concerns because a child repeatedly returns to a harmful situation or appears reluctant to accept help.

Patterns of unexplained absence, new possessions, older associates, injuries, fear, criminal behaviour or sudden behavioural change should be considered within the wider safeguarding picture.

54. Modern Slavery and Trafficking

Any concern that a child may be trafficked, subjected to forced labour, criminal exploitation or another form of modern slavery must be escalated promptly.

KDF should involve police, children's social care and other specialist agencies as appropriate and must not confront suspected exploiters where this may increase risk.

55. Self-Harm and Suicidal Concerns

Where a child discloses self-harm, suicidal thoughts or another serious mental-health concern, staff should respond calmly and take the disclosure seriously.

Immediate danger requires emergency medical or police assistance. Other concerns should be shared with parents or carers and appropriate healthcare or safeguarding services unless doing so would itself increase the child's risk.

KDF staff are not expected to provide clinical mental-health treatment but have a responsibility to ensure serious concerns reach appropriate support.

56. Substance Misuse

Alcohol, drugs, vaping substances or other harmful substance use by a child may indicate wider safeguarding, exploitation or wellbeing concerns.

The response should consider the child's safety and circumstances rather than relying solely on disciplinary action.

Where supply, exploitation or immediate medical danger is suspected, appropriate external agencies should be involved.

57. Online Communication with Students

Staff should use KDF-approved communication routes when communicating with students wherever practicable. Personal messaging, disappearing-message services or private social-media communication can create safeguarding and professional-boundary risks.

Communication should remain professional, relevant to KDF activity and capable of appropriate organisational oversight.

Where urgent circumstances require an alternative method, the communication should remain transparent and be reported or recorded where appropriate.

58. Staff Personal Social Media

Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries on personal social-media accounts. They should consider whether accepting, following or privately messaging current child students creates inappropriate access or blurred professional relationships.

Staff should not post confidential information about students or discuss safeguarding matters publicly.

Online conduct outside working hours may still raise safeguarding concerns where it indicates that an individual may be unsuitable to work with children.

59. Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

Personal mobile-phone use during direct student supervision should be limited to legitimate work, emergency or agreed purposes.

Personal devices must not be used to take unauthorised images of students or store child-related information contrary to KDF procedures.

The Staff IT, Communications, Social Media, Mobile Devices & AI Policy should be applied alongside this policy.

60. Artificial Intelligence and Safeguarding

AI systems must not be used to create, manipulate or sexualise images of children, generate abusive content or process confidential safeguarding information through unauthorised services.

Staff should recognise emerging safeguarding concerns involving AI-generated imagery, impersonation, sexualised deepfakes, bullying and coercion.

Any such concern involving a KDF student should be treated according to the underlying safeguarding risk rather than dismissed because the content is artificial or manipulated.

61. Visitors and Spectators

Parents, spectators and visitors remain subject to safeguarding expectations while on KDF premises. Access to children does not become unrestricted simply because a person is another child's parent or is familiar to staff.

Visitors should remain within authorised areas and should not enter training, office, toilet, changing or restricted areas without a legitimate reason.

Behaviour causing concern should be challenged or escalated appropriately.

62. Hirers and External Organisations

Hirers providing activities to children remain responsible for their own safeguarding procedures, recruitment, DBS arrangements where applicable, staffing and supervision.

KDF may require safeguarding assurances before approving or continuing a hire where children or adults at risk are involved.

Where KDF becomes aware of an immediate safeguarding risk within a hirer's activity, it will act to protect children rather than assuming that the concern belongs exclusively to the hirer.

63. Contractors

Contractors should not have unnecessary unsupervised access to children. Where contractors are present during sessions, work should be physically separated or appropriately supervised where practicable.

Whether a contractor requires a DBS check depends upon the nature, frequency and eligibility of the role and should not be determined through blanket assumptions.

Tools, hazardous materials and restricted work areas must remain inaccessible to children.

64. External Venues and Events

KDF safeguarding standards continue during performances, competitions, gradings and activities away from normal premises.

Event planning should consider supervision, toilets, changing, arrival and collection, missing-child procedures, photography, transport and access by members of the public.

Staff should understand that unfamiliar venues can create additional safeguarding risks and should plan accordingly.

65. Transport

Where KDF organises or directly controls transport arrangements involving children, safeguarding, insurance, driver suitability and supervision must be considered.

Staff should avoid unnecessary lone transport of an individual child where safer arrangements are reasonably available.

Where exceptional circumstances require an adult to transport a child alone, the arrangement should be transparent and communicated appropriately.

66. Gifts and Favouritism

Small, transparent gifts or recognition may be appropriate within normal reward arrangements, but staff must avoid secret, excessive or highly personal gifts to individual children.

Consistent favouritism may create professional-boundary concerns even where no individual action appears abusive.

Reward arrangements should be open, fair and consistent with KDF values.

67. Safeguarding and Behaviour Management

Behaviour management must remain respectful and proportionate. Staff must not use physical punishment, humiliation, threats of abandonment, degrading language, deprivation of essential needs or other abusive approaches.

Dysregulated or challenging behaviour should prompt consideration of unmet need, SEND, communication, environmental triggers and safeguarding concerns.

Behaviour that challenges staff does not reduce a child's entitlement to protection.

68. Safeguarding and Attendance

Unexpected or repeated absence may occasionally indicate a welfare concern. KDF's attendance follow-up procedures should therefore have a safeguarding dimension as well as a membership or administrative purpose.

Patterns of absence combined with behavioural change, unexplained injury or concerning family circumstances should be escalated.

Staff should avoid assuming that every missed class is a safeguarding concern while remaining alert to significant patterns.

69. Injury and First Aid Safeguarding Interface

Where a child presents with an unexplained injury, the immediate medical need should be addressed first. Staff should then consider whether the explanation or circumstances raise a safeguarding concern.

Staff should not interrogate the child about injuries but should record relevant spontaneous comments and escalate appropriately.

Accident and safeguarding records may need to remain separate while cross-referencing the same event appropriately.

70. Medical and Safeguarding Information

Medical needs can occasionally overlap with safeguarding, particularly where essential treatment is persistently withheld, fabricated or induced illness is suspected or a child's healthcare needs are repeatedly ignored.

Staff should follow both the Medical Needs, Medication & Individual Healthcare Support Policy and safeguarding procedures where required.

Clinical uncertainty should be referred to healthcare professionals rather than determined by KDF staff.

71. Confidentiality and Safeguarding Records

Safeguarding records require additional confidentiality and should be stored securely with access limited to appropriate people.

Safeguarding information should not be included casually in general staff notes, open office documents or communications visible to unrelated persons.

Records should be retained and transferred in accordance with legal, safeguarding and organisational requirements.

72. Recording Decisions Not to Refer

Where a safeguarding concern is reviewed and a decision is made not to refer externally, the reasoning should be recorded where the concern was sufficiently significant to require formal consideration.

This helps demonstrate decision-making and allows future concerns to be understood in context.

A decision not to refer at one stage does not prevent later referral if new information emerges.

73. Information from Third Parties

Safeguarding information received from parents, other clubs, schools, professionals or members of the public should be considered on its merits.

Staff should not dismiss information solely because the person reporting it is involved in a dispute with the person concerned.

Equally, allegations should not be assumed true without appropriate safeguarding assessment. KDF's role is to pass relevant concerns to those able to investigate properly.

74. False, Malicious or Unsubstantiated Allegations

An allegation that is not substantiated does not automatically mean it was deliberately false. Children may provide incomplete accounts, investigations may lack sufficient evidence or events may have been misunderstood.

No child should be punished merely because an allegation could not be proven.

Where evidence establishes that a deliberately malicious allegation has been made, the child's welfare and reasons for the behaviour should still be considered alongside any behavioural response.

75. Support for Children Following Safeguarding Incidents

Children affected by safeguarding concerns should be supported sensitively and should not be repeatedly questioned by multiple members of KDF staff.

Where practical, an appropriate trusted adult may provide ongoing reassurance while professional agencies undertake their work.

KDF should consider whether temporary activity adjustments, changes to groups or other arrangements are necessary to help the child feel safe.

76. Support for Staff

Receiving disclosures or managing safeguarding incidents can affect staff emotionally. KDF will encourage staff to access appropriate management and wellbeing support while maintaining confidentiality.

Staff support must never involve discussing confidential safeguarding details with colleagues who do not need to know.

77. Multi-Agency Working

KDF will cooperate with children's social care, police, health services, schools, safeguarding partnerships and other relevant organisations where this is necessary to protect children.

Staff should provide accurate information, respond appropriately to professional requests and implement agreed safety arrangements within KDF's role.

KDF will not obstruct safeguarding enquiries or attempt to protect its reputation by withholding relevant information.

78. Contextual Safeguarding

KDF recognises that safeguarding risks vary according to local circumstances and children's wider environments. Staff should be attentive to concerns occurring within peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods, online spaces and community settings.

Where local safeguarding partners identify particular patterns of concern, KDF may adapt training, supervision or safeguarding education accordingly.

Contextual safeguarding should not lead to stereotyping children based on postcode, school, ethnicity or socioeconomic background.

79. Preventative Safeguarding Education

KDF may use age-appropriate opportunities to reinforce messages about kindness, consent, boundaries, respectful relationships, online safety, asking for help and identifying trusted adults.

Safeguarding education should be integrated naturally with KDF's values and should not become unnecessarily frightening or clinical.

Students should repeatedly understand that they may speak to a trusted KDF adult if something is worrying them.

80. Safeguarding Displays and Information

KDF may display accessible safeguarding information identifying trusted adults and routes for seeking help.

Information should be suitable for different ages and communication needs and should make clear that safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously.

Emergency and external support routes may also be provided where appropriate.

81. Safeguarding Reviews and Audits

KDF will periodically review the effectiveness of its safeguarding arrangements, including training, record keeping, safer recruitment, reporting systems, physical environment, professional boundaries and management of allegations.

A safeguarding review should assess actual implementation rather than simply confirm that policies exist.

Significant findings should be tracked to completion through KDF's organisational improvement arrangements.

82. Learning from Incidents

Safeguarding incidents, allegations and near misses should be reviewed proportionately to identify whether organisational systems can be improved.

Learning may involve changes to staffing, premises arrangements, communication, training, professional boundaries or recording processes.

The purpose of organisational learning is to reduce future risk while avoiding inappropriate speculation about matters being investigated externally.

83. Failure to Follow Safeguarding Procedures

Failure to report a safeguarding concern, maintain professional boundaries or follow a reasonable safeguarding instruction may be addressed through supervision, retraining or formal employment procedures depending on seriousness.

A genuine mistake arising from uncertainty should be distinguished from deliberate concealment or reckless disregard for a child's welfare.

Staff should be encouraged to seek advice early rather than remain silent because they fear making the wrong decision.

84. Serious Safeguarding Misconduct

Conduct involving abuse of a child, sexualised behaviour, grooming, deliberate concealment of serious concerns, intentional unauthorised contact, serious misuse of images or deliberate exposure of a child to harm may constitute gross misconduct.

Employment action does not replace external safeguarding referrals. KDF must consider LADO, police, children's social care and DBS involvement independently of any internal disciplinary process.

A person resigning during an investigation does not automatically end KDF's safeguarding responsibilities.

85. Kindness

The KDF value of Kindness means children are listened to, treated with dignity and supported when they are worried, frightened or harmed.

Kindness does not mean avoiding difficult safeguarding decisions to preserve relationships. Taking protective action when necessary is itself an expression of care.

86. Diversity

The KDF value of Diversity requires KDF to recognise that vulnerability, communication, culture, disability, identity and lived experience affect how children experience and disclose harm.

Safeguarding practice must challenge discrimination and avoid assumptions about who can be a victim, who can cause harm or what a "typical" safeguarding concern looks like.

Every child is entitled to equal protection.

87. Friendship

The KDF value of Friendship means children learn that healthy relationships involve respect, boundaries, consent and looking out for one another.

Friendship must never be used as a justification for secrecy, coercion, bullying or pressure between children.

Staff should model professional, respectful relationships throughout KDF.

88. The KDF Promise

This policy is central to the KDF Promise: Every Student, Every Session, Every Time. Every student should enter each KDF session knowing that adults are responsible for protecting them, listening to them and responding when something is wrong.

Delivering the Promise means taking safeguarding action even where it is difficult, inconvenient or uncomfortable.

The welfare of the child remains KDF's paramount operational consideration.

89. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside KDF's Safer Recruitment, DBS & Pre-Employment Checks Policy, Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy, Staff Code of Conduct & Professional Standards, Professional Boundaries & Relationships Policy, Disciplinary, Gross Misconduct & Suspension Policy, Whistleblowing & Protected Disclosures Policy, Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Harassment & Dignity at Work Policy, Staff IT, Communications, Social Media, Mobile Devices & AI Policy, Confidentiality, Data Protection, Conflicts, Leaving KDF & Personnel Records Policy, First Aid & Emergency Medical Response Policy, Medical Needs, Medication & Individual Healthcare Support Policy, Allergy Awareness & Anaphylaxis Policy, Accident, Incident, Near-Miss & RIDDOR Policy, Site Security, Keyless Entry, Access Control & Lockdown Policy, Emergency, Critical Incident & Business Continuity Policy, Visitors, Spectators, Hirers & Contractors Safety Policy, Hire of Premises & Facilities Policy, SEND Policy, Early Years Policy, Attendance Policy, Behaviour and Aggressive or Volatile Behaviour policies and all other relevant KDF safeguarding and welfare procedures.

These policies should be applied together rather than in isolation where a concern involves safeguarding alongside employment, medical, SEND, behaviour, premises, digital or external-provider issues.

90. Policy Review

This policy will normally be reviewed annually. An earlier review will take place following significant changes to safeguarding legislation or guidance, a serious safeguarding

incident, a safeguarding audit, organisational restructuring, significant change to KDF provision or learning arising from a local or national safeguarding review.

The Safeguarding Lead and KDF Senior Leadership should remain aware of updates to national and local safeguarding guidance throughout the year rather than relying solely on the annual policy-review date.

KDF will continue to strengthen a safeguarding culture in which children are listened to, concerns are acted upon, adults remain professionally accountable and the welfare of every child remains central to organisational decision-making.